



**PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**October 2, 2014**

West Hollywood Park Public Meeting Room – Council Chambers  
625 N. San Vicente Boulevard, West Hollywood, California 90069

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Huebner called the meeting of the Planning Commission to order at 6:30 P.M.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Susan Pinkus led the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. **ROLL CALL:**  
Commissioners Present: Buckner, DeLuccio, Shink, Yeber, Vice-Chair Aghaei, Chair Huebner.  
  
Commissioners Absent: Altschul.  
  
Staff Present: Emily Stadnicki, Senior Planner, Adrian Gallo, Associate Planner, Stephanie Reich, Urban Designer, David DeGrazia, Current and Historic Preservation Planning Manager, Christi Hogin, Assistant City Attorney and David Gillig, Commission Secretary.
4. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA.**  
**ACTION:** Approve the Planning Commission Agenda of Thursday, October 2, 2014 as presented. **Moved by Commissioner DeLuccio, seconded by Commissioner Shink and passes; noting Commissioner Altschul absent.**
5. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES.**  
**A. September 4, 2014**  
  
**ACTION:** Approve the Planning Commission regular meeting minutes of Thursday, September 4, 2014 as presented. **Moved by Commissioner Buckner, seconded by Commissioner DeLuccio and passes; noting Commissioner Altschul absent.**
6. **PUBLIC COMMENT.** None.
7. **DIRECTOR'S REPORT.**  
Stephanie DeWolfe, Community Development Director presented the Director's Report.  
  
She provided a re-cap of the 8899 Beverly Boulevard mixed-use project that went before City Council on Monday, September 22, 2014. She stated staff had recommended denial of the project to the Planning Commission, and the Planning Commission recommended denial to the City Council. By the time it got to City Council for review, the applicant had submitted an alternative proposal. The City Council saw an alternative, which the Planning Commission did not see.

The primary difference was the removal of the affordable housing building on Rosewood Avenue. A total of four affordable housing units were removed from the project and those units were replaced with an in-kind contribution to the affordable housing trust fund. That reduced the FAR on Rosewood Avenue to .5, so it was in compliance with the plans. What was submitted to City Council was the project as originally submitted to the Planning Commission, and the alternative, with a new list of public benefits that were offered by the applicant.

City Council stated they liked the adaptive reuse of the building, the affordable housing, and the green building efforts that were being made. They asked the applicant to reconsider the public benefits and to consider a project with reduced massing on the taller building. They continued the project to a date uncertain.

She stated on the upcoming City Council meeting on Monday, October 6, 2014, will be a White Paper item regarding the MTA site on Santa Monica Boulevard on the consent calendar. Also, the Melrose Triangle project will be brought back as directed, with clarification on traffic mitigation measures that will be voluntarily funded by the applicant for the surrounding neighborhood.

There is an additional item regarding the installation of additional pedestrian signals on Santa Monica Boulevard.

Commissioner Yeber questioned if City Council directed the project to come back before the Design Review Subcommittee or Planning Commission.

Stephanie DeWolfe, Community Development Director stated City Council directed staff to return the item to council directly.

Commissioner DeLuccio requested an update regarding the Sunset La Cienega Boulevard mixed-use project.

Chair Huebner stated the Design Review Subcommittee met with the applicant and architect for the Sunset La Cienega Boulevard project at a special meeting on Tuesday, September 30, 2014.

He specified they are requesting their foundation permit. They made some changes to the plaza between the two hotel towers. There were some substantive changes made to the southern edge of the plaza, in regards to the architectural look and pedestrian access. They improved site-lines to the basin, added glass, changed the hardscape from pavers to wood. A lot of positive enhancements were made. It will probably come back with the changes that were requested regarding the southern edge of the plaza at a later date.

**8. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS.**

Vice-Chair Aghaei thanked the public in advance for participating in the public hearing process for 826 N. Kings Road.

Commissioner Yeber thanked the public in advance for participating in the public hearing process for 826 N. Kings Road.

Commissioner DeLuccio commended and thanked Emily Stadnicki, Senior Planner on her past accomplishments and wished her continued success.

**9. CONSENT CALENDAR.** None.

**10. PUBLIC HEARINGS.**

**A. 826 N. Kings Road:**

Commissioner Shink disclosed for the record she spoke with the applicant. They discussed matters contained in the staff report.

Commissioner DeLuccio disclosed for the record he made a site visit with the applicant. They discussed matters contained in the staff report.

Commissioner Yeber disclosed for the record he spoke with the applicant. They discussed matters contained in the staff report.

Commissioner Buckner had no official disclosures.

Vice-Chair Aghaei had no official disclosures.

Chair Huebner disclosed for the record he spoke with the applicant. They discussed matters contained in the staff report.

Emily Stadnicki, Senior Planner provided an oral and visual presentation and background information as presented in the staff report dated Thursday, October 2, 2014.

She stated the project at 826 Kings Road is a proposal is to demolish a two-story single-family residence and to construct an approximately 40,000-square-foot, five-story, thirty-four-unit apartment building with five affordable units on-site.

The site is approximately 22,500 square feet and is zoned R4B (Medium-Density Multi-Family Residential). The zoning for the site permits up to twenty-five base units (before taking into account additional affordable units). The project includes twenty one-bedroom units and fourteen two-bedroom units. The units range in size from 867 to 2,030 square feet.

All new residential projects in the R3 and R4 zoning districts are required to be built to a minimum of 90% of the density allowed by the zoning district.

A total of forty-eight parking spaces are required for this project; one space for each one--bedroom unit and two spaces for each two--bedroom unit. No guest spaces are required when affordable units are included on-site. All the parking is provided in the subterranean garage and the project does not include any tandem spaces.

Stephanie Reich, Urban Designer, provided the design review report. She stated the project is a sophisticated three-dimensional proposal that presents a strong design idea. It provides sensitivity to mass and scale with attention to detail that is well designed and tailored to its site. The project incorporates sustainability principles in a way that serves to enhance the building design. The project also incorporates as much planting as possible at grade, with plantings on upper floors.

The front of the project provides a significant step-back by providing common open space and a community room on the third floor. She stated the community room is proposed to have a custom metal paneling around it, which will be incorporated as the art element, which was approved by the Urban Arts Subcommittee.

The fifth floor is set-back from the building edges, to reduce the massing as it appears from below. The project employs a variety of materials that highlight the design concept. The use of materials will help accentuate the variety of features that combine for an interesting three-dimensional architectural solution.

Vice Chair Aghaei provided the Design Review Subcommittee report. He stated comments from the public included concerns about light and shade, and current trees on the site. The subcommittee thought favorably of the design, and appreciated the openings, and air and light. They had concerns regarding the front façade facing Kings Road.

Stephanie Reich, Urban Designer, stated the applicant has opened up the second floor, more with a greater transparency, and proposed one of the oak trees to be relocated on-site.

Emily Stadnicki, Senior Planner stated the proposed project complies with the development standards and modification requirements.

The on-site affordable housing units entitle the project to two concessions.

The applicant has requested one concession from the options listed in the Zoning Code: an additional story, not to exceed ten feet of total project height.

Additionally, four modifications are being requested as allowed by the Zoning Code. Modifications are adjustments of up to 10% to the standards of the Zoning Ordinance. A 10% reduction of the front yard setback, a 10% reduction to the rear yard setback; a 10% reduction to the side yard setback, and a 10% reduction of standard parking stalls for up to 40% of the parking spaces

Overall, this proposal is well suited for this site and the surrounding neighborhood. The development is designed with exceptional architectural quality, is complementary to the context of the neighborhood, and meets the development standards and modifications requirements.

Staff recommends approval of project as conditioned.

She stated for the record changes to draft Resolution No. PC 14-1104:

Section 3 and 4: the word "*not*" should be added before "*the notable work.*" It shall read: "*not a notable work.*"

Section 3.b. page 2 of 16: the acreage should be ".52 acres"; the square footage number is correct; and

Section 11.5, page 15 of 16: the words "*...and visitors*" should be struck from the record. Visitor spaces are not required for this project.

Commissioner DeLuccio requested clarification regarding the traffic study.

Commissioner Yeber requested clarification regarding the relocation of the oak trees.

Chair Huebner opened the public hearing for Item 10.A.:

DEMETRI DARMOS, WEST HOLLYWOOD, applicant, presented the applicants report. He spoke regarding architectural style, rental standards, affordable housing, and neighborhood compatibility.

RIC ABRAMSON, WEST HOLLYWOOD, architect, continued the applicants report. He spoke and detailed neighborhood compatibility, massing, inclusionary housing units, subterranean parking, density, height and setbacks, building amenities, pedestrian path and activity, landscaping, trees and relocation, breezeways, light wells, side yards, green screens, interior activity, quiet zone, unit sizes, outdoor space, common open space, and sustainable design.

Commissioner DeLuccio questioned the proposed building height, and the building height to the north of the proposed project. He also requested clarification of the concessions.

RIC ABRAMSON, WEST HOLLYWOOD, stated the proposed building height is fifty-five feet. The building to the north is approximately six feet lower; forty-nine feet. He detailed the proposed modifications that deal with the parking stalls, minor setbacks, rear setback, and guardrail horizontal projection.

Commissioner Shink requested clarification regarding the discussion with the Home Owners Association (HOA) next door, and the trees.

RIC ABRAMSON, WEST HOLLYWOOD, stated they have met with the HOA next door, and there is a joint agreement regarding the trees. The trees will be replaced.

Commissioner Yeber requested clarification of the olive tree and proposed locations of the oak trees.

ARON NUSSBAUM, WEST HOLLYWOOD, landscape architect, continued the applicants report. He stated there are currently three existing mature coast live oak trees in the front yard. Two will be transplanted as street trees in the parkway, and one will be in the front yard. The olive tree will be planted in the front yard also. A pine tree and another oak tree will be preserved in the back. There will also be trees located on the third level in groupings.

KEVIN STALTER, WEST HOLLYWOOD, President of Kings Plaza HOA, has concerns regarding this item. He read into the record the agreement reached with the developer. He stated the agreement reached with the developer and the HOA in no way condones or approves of the project. The residents oppose the size and scale of the project.

Christi Hogin, Assistant City Attorney, clarified for the record, the First Amendment to the Constitution affords anyone who wishes to exercise their right to anonymous speech. The city encourages people to state their name and city of residence; however, there is no legal requirement for anyone to state their name or city of residence in a public forum.

CYNTHIA BLATT, WEST HOLLYWOOD, opposes staff's recommendation of approval.

DIXIE MCKIE, WEST HOLLYWOOD, opposes staff's recommendation of approval.

LYNDSY FONSECA, WEST HOLLYWOOD, opposes staff's recommendation of approval.

LOUIS MARCEL, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke in support of staff's recommendation of approval.

SUSAN PINKUS, WEST HOLLYWOOD, opposes staff's recommendation of approval.

GARY MORE, WEST HOLLYWOOD, opposes staff's recommendation of approval.

LINDI WEINSTEIN, WEST HOLLYWOOD, opposes staff's recommendation of approval.

STEVE SYLVESTER, WEST HOLLYWOOD, opposes staff's recommendation of approval.

FATIMA BURNEY, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke in support of staff's recommendation of approval.

LYNN RUSSELL, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke in support of staff's recommendation of approval.

KIERAN MCKIERNAN, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke in support of staff's recommendation of approval.

ROBERT CAHILL, WEST HOLLYWOOD, has concerns regarding this item. He spoke regarding parking and parking permits.

MARTIN LOWERY, WEST HOLLYWOOD, opposes staff's recommendation of approval.

ROBERT SWITZER, WEST HOLLYWOOD, opposes staff's recommendation of approval.

CHARLES ANTEBY, WEST HOLLYWOOD, has concerns regarding this item. He spoke regarding height, massing and density.

PAM KOMAC, WEST HOLLYWOOD, opposes staff's recommendation of approval.

RIVKA DAYAN, WEST HOLLYWOOD, opposes staff's recommendation of approval.

ANTHONY CARFELLO, LOS ANGELES, Programs Manager, Schindler House has concerns regarding this item. He spoke regarding height and massing.

JEANNE DOBRIN, WEST HOLLYWOOD, has concerns regarding this item. She spoke regarding height and parking.

VICTOR OMELCZENKO, WEST HOLLYWOOD, has concerns regarding this item. He spoke regarding historic preservation.

STEVE MARTIN, WEST HOLLYWOOD, has concerns regarding this item. He spoke regarding massing and parking.

**THE FOLLOWING OPPOSE STAFF'S RECOMMENDATION OF APPROVAL, BUT CHOSE NOT TO PUBLICLY SPEAK:**

NORMAN B. HARTSTEIN, WEST HOLLYWOOD, NICHOLAS ORBROM, WEST HOLLYWOOD, RICHARD AYOUB, WEST HOLLYWOOD,

MARK LEHMAN, applicant's representative, presented the applicants rebuttal. He spoke regarding the housing policy, neighborhood compatibility, high density, affordable housing, height, setbacks, parking, traffic, and design. He reiterated state and city law mandates. He stated if you have affordable housing, you are allowed one additional story. If you have affordable housing on-site, no guest parking shall be required. He requested approval.

**ACTION:** Close public hearing for Item 10.A.: **Motion carried by consensus of the Commission.**

Commissioner Yeber requested clarification regarding the CEQA analyses.

Emily Stadnicki, Senior Planner stated: 1) the project is applicable to the General Plan designation and all policies and zoning designations; 2) the development occurs within city limits on a project site of no more than 5 acres surrounded by urban uses; 3) the project site has no value as a habitat for endangered rare or threatened species; 4) approval of the project would not result in significant effects relating to traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality; and the site can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services.

The city's threshold is 500 daily trips, or 60 or more net peak hour trips. This project, based on that, would create 225 daily trips and 20 peak hour trips; which is below the city's threshold for the traffic impacts. Therefore a full traffic study was not done. That is city policy.

Commissioner Yeber requested clarification regarding the housing element.

Emily Stadnicki, Senior Planner stated all projects are required to comply with the Affordable Housing Ordinance. She confirmed this project does.

Commissioner DeLuccio commented on the city's affordable housing goals. He stated the City Council sets the policy. The policy in current use allows for this type of development. It is permitted according to the zoning ordinance. Also, SB 1818 permits the additional height with on-site affordable housing. He stated the only finding that would need to be made, in order for this project not to be approved, would be that it is not compatible with the neighborhood. He stated his support of this finding and noted the developer made a good attempt at the design of the building, but he is not sure they succeeded in being sensitive to the buildings on either side.



Commissioner Shink commented on zoning, and reiterated that is City Councils purview. The Planning Commission has to make sure developers are compliant with that. She stated the building is a very pretty building, and the applicants did everything they could to make it work. They went beyond due diligence in terms of the setbacks. She spoke on density, massing and preserving neighborhoods. She stated we are defined by the zoning code, and there is nothing where the applicants have not complied with the code.

Commissioner Buckner stated the Planning Commission's job isn't to change the law, but to apply the law. In this case, the developer has complied with all aspects that are required by city ordinance and state law. She also pointed out the design and neighborhood compatibly. She stated her support of the design, and spoke regarding the landscaping, parking, congestion and future development. She stated her support of staff's recommendation of approval.

Commissioner Yeber spoke regarding the challenges of parking on Kings Road. He suggested staff work with the Transportation and Parking Department to see if there is a way to squeeze additional parking on the street, perhaps a different configuration to accommodate more cars. He stated for the record this development fits within the zoning code. He spoke regarding the massing and scale; in relevance to the existing buildings. He stated compatibility is a very objective situation and this complements The Habitat building across the street. In terms of articulation and scale, it is no bigger in massing or scale than most other buildings on Kings Road. He spoke regarding the sustainable characteristics that have been infused in this building. This is one of the most interesting projects, in terms of taking advantage of natural light, and natural ventilation. He stated his support of staff's recommendation of approval.

Vice-Chair Aghaei acknowledged a lot of the concerns regarding parking, and the change in the fabric of the neighborhood. He stated the zoning code, not only encourages, but requires at least 90% of the maximum density that would be permitted on this lot, needs to be achieved. The applicant has complied with the code and it seems the applicant has done even more, by setting it back further than required. He stated the design is appealing, it complements The Habitat building across the street, and the use of the light wells, ventilation through the project is a smart design. He stated his support of staff's recommendation of approval.

Chair Huebner reiterated we are not here to make the law, but to apply the law. The developer and architect have done an exemplary job on the design of this building. He spoke regarding the landscaping, setbacks, parking and greening. He specified future zoning needs to be looked at and modified, so this kind of development is mitigated. He stated his support of staff's recommendation of approval.

**Commissioner Buckner moved to: 1) approve staff's recommendation of approval.**

**Seconded by Commissioner Yeber.**

**Commissioner Shink requested an amendment: 1) not to interfere with the architect's landscape; but to do all due diligence to save as many of the trees as possible, in accordance with the concerns of the public.**

**Commissioner Buckner agreed to this amendment.**

**Commissioner Yeber agreed to this amendment.**

**Commissioner DeLuccio requested an amendment to draft Resolution No. PC 14-1104; Section 9.1: *strike "...approval of the Planning Commission Design Review Subcommittee."***

**Commissioner Buckner agreed to this amendment.**

**Commissioner Yeber agreed to this amendment.**

Commissioner DeLuccio stated for the record he is not voting to approve staff's recommendation. He believes a finding can be made that it is not compatible with the neighborhood, and even though it is well designed, the design is not sensitive to the buildings on either side.

**ACTION:** 1) Approve the application; 2) Adopt Resolution No. PC 14-1104 as amended: *a) all due diligence to save as many trees as possible; in accordance with the concerns of the public; b) Section 9.1) Exterior color and material samples, along with final construction plans for the project, shall be subject to the review and approval of the ~~Planning Commission Design Review Subcommittee and the Director of Community Development prior to issuance of building permits:~~ "A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD, CONDITIONALLY APPROVING A DEMOLITION PERMIT, DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AND FOUR MODIFICATION PERMITS FOR THE DEMOLITION OF A SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENCE AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF A FIVE-STORY, THIRTY-FOUR UNIT APARTMENT BUILDING, LOCATED AT 826 N. KINGS ROAD, WEST HOLLYWOOD CALIFORNIA"; and 3) Close Public Hearing Item 10.A. Moved by Commissioner Buckner, seconded by Commissioner Yeber and passes; noting Commissioner DeLuccio voting NO and Commissioner Altschul absent.*

**THE COMMISSION TOOK A FIFTEEN (15) MINUTE RECESS AT 8:40 P.M. AND RECONVENED AT 8:55 P.M.**

**B. 9015 Sunset Boulevard:**

Commissioner Shink disclosed for the record she met with the applicant. They discussed matters contained in the staff report.

Commissioner DeLuccio disclosed for the record he made a site visit with the applicant's representatives. They discussed matters contained in the staff report.

Vice-Chair Aghaei disclosed for the record he met with the applicant's representatives. They discussed matters contained in the staff report.

Commissioner Buckner disclosed for the record she met with the applicant's representatives. They discussed matters contained in the staff report.

Commissioner Yeber disclosed for the record he spoke with the applicant's representatives. They discussed matters contained in the staff report.

Chair Huebner disclosed for the record he spoke with the applicant's representatives. They discussed matters contained in the staff report.

Adrian Gallo, Associate Planner, provided an oral and visual presentation and background information as presented in the staff report dated Thursday, October 2, 2014.

He provided a history of the property and stated the proposal is a request to replace a double-side roof-mounted sign with a 14 ft. x 48 ft. billboard atop a pole. The top of the billboard structure will have a maximum height of 110 feet. The business identification sign for The Rainbow Bar and Grill, will remain in place.

The billboard faces would be visible from either direction on Sunset Boulevard. The billboard rises above the building and above the recommended height limit of 60 feet. The building is approximately 28 feet high and the top of the billboard face rises to a maximum height of 110 feet.

He stated an Initial Study and a Mitigated Negative Declaration were prepared regarding this project. The primary issue of concern was the potential for the project to create a new source of substantial light or glare that would trespass onto neighboring properties.

A Lighting Impact Report was commissioned by the environmental consultant. The report found that the proposed new light fixtures along the bottom of the east and west sides of the double-sided billboard would be the specific cause of significant light impacts to neighboring properties.

In order to reduce the lighting and glare impacts to a less than significant level, mitigation measures have been incorporated to reduce the potential for the project to adversely affect the surrounding properties.

This project is different in that it does not entirely comply with the standards for new billboards. However a development agreement and zoning map amendment is proposed that would place the property in a Development Agreement Overlay that allows different development standards than required by the Zoning Ordinance.

The Development Agreement includes language that allows the standard billboard to be interchanged with a creative billboard. Creative billboard incorporate elements such as moving parts, inflated additions, and three dimensional projections.

The proposed Development Agreement will provide an on-going public benefit to the City, and with the ability to interchange from a standard billboard to a creative billboard it continues to represent the Sunset Strip's unique character.

Staff concludes that the proposed Billboard Permit is consistent with the Goals, Objectives and Policies of the General Plan and Sunset Specific Plan.

He stated for the record staff has received numerous phone calls from residents opposing the proposed project. Their main concerns include the requested height, light trespass and the proliferation of billboards on Sunset.

Staff recommends approval.

Commissioner Shink requested clarification regarding impediment of views to residents.

Adrian Gallo, Associate Planner stated due to the vertical nature of the billboard, it is not blocking as much as a horizontal sign would.

Commissioner Yeber requested clarification of the Billboard Study.

Chair Huebner opened the public hearing for Item 10.B.:

STEVEN AFRIAT, LOS ANGELES, applicant's representative, presented the applicant's report. He provided a history of past billboards and creative sign applications. He stated this is a pole mounted sign. It is 110 feet high. Staff concluded this was the most ideal location for the sign, stating that it was very important to preserve the pedestrian and public's view of the iconic rocking Roxy on-site sign.

He alleviated the concerns regarding loss of views from the neighbors in the Sunset hills. He stated the sign is actually above some of the views of some of the houses. So a sign that would be lower, could be more visible to some of the people who live there. There is a strict lighting standard. There will be no spill over light from this signage.

He spoke and detailed pedestrian experiences, unique pole design, lighting, future advertising, development agreement, mitigated negative declaration, and the material that will be used for the pole. He stated for the record, all the existing off-site billboards on the roof-top of the Rainbow will be taken down as of this approval.

He urged recommendation of approval to the City Council.

LYNN RUSSEL, WEST HOLLYWOOD, has concerns regarding this item. She spoke regarding the aesthetics of the pole sign.

GENEVIEVE MORRILL, MARINA DEL REY, President/CEO, West Hollywood Chamber of Commerce, spoke in support of staff's recommendation of approval to City Council.

BRETT LATTERI, LOS ANGELES, spoke in support of staff's recommendation of approval to City Council.

STEVE MARTIN, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke in support of staff's recommendation of approval to City Council.

JEANNE DOBRIN, WEST HOLLYWOOD, has concerns regarding this item. She spoke regarding possible obstruction of views.

STEVEN AFRIAT, LOS ANGELES, applicant's representative, presented the applicant's rebuttal. He stated this will be an improved condition at this location. He reiterated the height concerns and light glare. He urged support.

Chair Huebner questioned the height of the 9000 Sunset Boulevard tall wall.

Adrian Gallo, Associate Planner stated it is 194 feet tall.

**ACTION:** Close public hearing for Item 10.B.: **Motion carried by consensus of the Commission.**

Commissioner DeLuccio commended staff and the applicant for working together on this application.

**Commissioner DeLuccio moved to: 1) recommend approval to the City Council.**

**Seconded by Commissioner Buckner.**

Commissioner Shink commented on the aesthetics of the pole, and spoke on the creativity of imagining the future of billboard poles.

Chair Huebner stated this is very striking and revolutionary. He stated his support of the recommendation to City Council.

Vice-Chair Aghaei noted the great design.

Commissioner Buckner spoke regarding the aesthetics and was in support of the removal of the roof signs.

Commissioner Yeber stated his support of removing the roof-top signs and having a solo location for the signage. He appreciates the efforts the city is undertaking, as well as different creative ways in which to support these billboards. However, he finds it odd to see this sign floating out. He appreciates the sculptural qualities of the pole, but he doesn't see the pole. He noted he sees this floating billboard. He stated if we are going to go down this path, he would like to see these poles more sculptural, more of an object.

He stated he does not believe this takes it far enough. He noted he is having difficulty looking at this billboard from a contextual standpoint. He feels it does not fit in to this particular area, and it is out of scale. He disagrees it is an urban design strategy. He does not support the recommendation of approval to City Council.

**ACTION:** 1) Adopt Resolution No. PC 14-1097 as presented: "A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD, RECOMMENDING TO THE CITY COUNCIL THE ADOPTION OF A NEGATIVE DECLARATION AND A ZONING MAP AMENDMENT IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT, FOR THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 9015 SUNSET BOULEVARD, WEST HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA;" 2) Adopt Resolution No. PC 14-1098 as presented: "A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD, RECOMMENDING CITY COUNCIL APPROVAL OF A DOUBLE-SIDED 14 FOOT WIDE BY 48 FOOT HIGH BILLBOARD ATOP A POLE, LOCATED AT 9015 SUNSET BOULEVARD, WEST HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA;" 3) Adopt Resolution No. PC 14-1099 as presented: "A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD, RECOMMENDING TO THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVAL OF A BILLBOARD PERMIT TO REPLACE A ROOF-MOUNTED SIGN WITH A DOUBLE-SIDED FOURTEEN FOOT WIDE BY 48 FOOT HIGH BILLBOARD ATOP A POLE, LOCATED AT 9015 SUNSET BOULEVARD, WEST HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA;" and 4) Close Public Hearing Item 10.B. **Moved by Commissioner DeLuccio, seconded by Commissioner Buckner and passes; noting Commissioner Yeber voting NO and Commissioner Altschul absent.**

**THE COMMISSION TOOK A FIVE (5) MINUTE RECESS AT 9:30 P.M. AND RECONVENED AT 9:35 P.M.**

*Vice-Chair Aghaei recused himself from the meeting due to having a residence within 500' of the West Hollywood West Neighborhood.*

*Commissioner DeLuccio recused himself from the meeting due to having a residence within 500' of the West Hollywood West Neighborhood.*

**C. West Hollywood West Neighborhood Overlay Zone:**

Stephanie Reich, Urban Designer, provided an oral presentation and background information as presented in the staff report dated Thursday, October 2, 2014.

She stated this is a proposal for the West Hollywood West Neighborhood Overlay District and Design Guidelines. She provided a history, stating staff began meeting with the community last fall because of their concerns about new construction. Staff has worked extensively with the community to develop these recommendations.

The recommendations include a zoning code portion, the Neighborhood Overlay District, and Design Guidelines. Staff is recommending a discussion begin tonight to focus on the Zoning Code portion, or Overlay District and continue the item to Thursday, October 16, 2014.

On Thursday, October 16, 2014, staff would like to focus the discussion on the Design Guidelines, and request you make a recommendation to City Council at that time.

Gerdo Aquino, CEO of SWA presented the project. This project applies to the West Hollywood West Neighborhood only. He provided a project history, stating the initial community meeting took place on December 3, 2013.

The community concerns consisted of:

- Size, height, and massing of new buildings;
- Lack of differentiation in design (“they all look the same”);
- Insensitive design (“they look like commercial buildings”);
- Loss of privacy because of proximity of buildings and windows; and
- Destruction of neighborhood character

Second Community Meeting: February 5, 2014. The following options were presented:

- Modify the Zoning Ordinance for the R1B Zone;
- Develop an Overlay Zone to modify regulations just for the West Hollywood West Neighborhood;
- Develop Design Guidelines for additional guidance specific to the West Hollywood West Neighborhood; and
- Provide additional design review by the Planning Commission Design Review Subcommittee

He stated, the majority of those attending the February 5, 2014 meeting expressed a strong presence for an Overlay Zone and Design Guidelines, and not additional design review.

City Council adopted a Moratorium on April 7, 2014 for new construction, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor additions, and additions over 500 square feet.

The community process for the project beginning in June included community meetings, Mind Mixer Website and Working Groups.

There are -725 dwelling units in West Hollywood West; 28 people attended Community Meeting 1; 57 people attended Community Meeting 2; 26 people participated in the Neighborhood Night Out Pop-Up Event; 50 participants on the on-line activities; estimated 90% of attendees from Community Meetings 1 and 2 live in the West Hollywood West neighborhood; 90% of on-line participants live in the City of West Hollywood; and 84% of on-line participants live in West Hollywood West zip codes.

#### Project Goals:

Through collaboration between members of the community, urban design professionals and City staff, the West Hollywood West Neighborhood Overlay District and Design Guidelines have been developed to achieve the following goals:

- 1) Manage change within the West Hollywood West Neighborhood;
- 2) Protect desirable qualities and characteristics of the neighborhood valued by current residents and property owners;
- 3) Allow flexibility for creative design solutions; and
- 4) Provide clear rules and guidelines for owners, builders, and design professionals to facilitate an efficient process when preparing applications for new single-family, multi-family dwellings and additions.

He detailed the remaining approval process.

Janet Perserof of SWA [resented solutions to the issues that have been brought forward by the residents and property owners.



She stated the primary concerns are buildings that look too large and buildings that do not fit in with the neighborhood. The objective was to make houses appear smaller in order to fit with the neighborhood, while allowing flexibility and variety of house designs.

The community supported: smaller second floors, with some concern toward “family-friendly” floor plans; breaking up large, flat walls; providing a choice between two approaches; and addressing roof shape to help buildings “fit” in the neighborhood.

The proposed Zoning Code offers a choice: smaller second floor with indentions on all sides; indentions or projections on front and both sides; prevent a single, unbroken roofline across the front of the property, the roofline must have a vertical or minimum 3 foot horizontal change in direction.

Another objective was massing; to reduce the bulk of houses by encouraging alternatives to attached garages.

The community supported: not requiring covered parking; maintaining on-site parking requirements; tandem on the side or rear side-by-side parking, or detached rear garages; front garages that are set back from the building face; and screened or unscreened side parking, and lower driveway gates at the lot line, or taller gates set back.

The proposed Zoning Code regulates: no requirement for covered parking, on-site requirement unchanged; code to prohibit side-by-side parking in front of the building; driveway within the front property is limited to no wider than 10 feet.

Also: attached garages are included in the FAR; code to require attached garages to be set back at least 6 feet from the front of the building; detached garages, up to 400 square feet are not included in the FAR; and semi-subterranean garages with ramps are prohibited.

Design Guidelines proposes: guidelines for driveway gates/screening for parking; and guidelines to encourage carports/port on the side.

Another objective is regarding massing; help reduce the size of front buildings by increasing flexibility for rear buildings.

What is proposed: code changes to accessory structures only; accessory structures function as an extension of the primary structure; no changes to requirements for second residential units; and second residential units are still allowed, cannot be within setbacks and require on-site parking.

Proposed for the Zoning Code: allow accessory structures on the lot line, regardless of lot size; must comply with building and fire and safety codes; prohibit openings and exterior lighting within six feet of the lot line; and prohibit cooking facilities.

Objective regarding privacy: develop requirements that balance privacy concerns, building function, and building appearance.

The community supported: no roof decks; smaller side balconies with privacy screens or increased setbacks; some screening and size limit for rear balconies; and no privacy screens or size limit for front balconies.

Proposed for the Zoning Code: Code to prohibit roof decks; side balconies no longer than 80 square feet, must have minimum five foot high privacy screen if within twenty feet of lot line; rear balconies no larger than 144 square feet; must have five foot high privacy screen on the side; and no privacy screen or size limit for front balconies.

Proposed for the Design Guidelines: integrate screening with overall architectural design; and select durable, high-quality materials for privacy screens.

The objective is to develop requirements that balance privacy concerns, building function, and building appearance. The community was supportive of smaller, and staggered side windows; high, clearstory windows; and frosted or stained glass, shutters, or other approaches to mitigating privacy.

Proposed for the Design Guidelines: place and size windows to allow for both natural light and privacy; and clearstory windows or clusters of small windows may be appropriate.

Objective regarding variation: provide variation in new projects to respect and enhance the eclectic nature of the neighborhood.

The community supports: diversity of building design; variety of styles; and flexibility for innovative designs,

Objective regarding livability: develop guidelines that improve livability in regards to neighborhood walkability, light impacts, and sound impacts.

The community supports: improving safety/visibility at driveway-sidewalk intersections; Working Group recommendation to improve walkability of narrow sidewalks; lighting that balances safety, function, and impacts to the surrounding properties; and avoiding advance noise impacts to surrounding properties.

Proposed for the Zoning Code: Code to prohibit sight obstructions in vicinity of driveway-sidewalk intersection; and code to require eighteen inch clearance between sidewalk and front fence or tall vegetation.

Proposed for the Design Guidelines: limit glare, light trespass, and sky glow from exterior and interior light sources; and prevent adverse noise to adjacent properties.

Gerdo Aquino, CEO of SWA provided the remaining project timeline.

Chair Huebner requested clarification regarding the subterranean parking.

Stephanie Reich, Urban Designer stated the community was very concerned about the way a ramp down to a garage has a very commercial look. The Overlay District makes a provision for mechanical [subterranean] parking that does not have a ramp. Staff believes this balances the desire to have parking underground.

Commissioner Yeber stated he could understand the subterranean, but semi-subterranean parking has been done very successfully that does not look commercial. One of the ways is the paving surface is broken up to allow turf or green. We should allow at least an option, but make sure it addresses the concerns from the neighborhood.

Chair Huebner indicated the semi-subterranean parking could be done successfully and it should not automatically be precluded.

Commissioner Buckner stated her concern to prohibit the semi-subterranean parking, that it allows less variation in design.

Commissioner Shink stated the [semi]-subterranean parking elevates and it is an issue of privacy. She stated her support of what was presented.

Chair Huebner opened the public hearing for Item 10.C.:

MANNY RODRIGUEZ, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke in support of the proposed zoning changes for the West Hollywood West Overlay District.

JENNA LEVENSTEIN, WEST HOLLYWOOD, has concerns regarding this item. She commented on balcony size, screening, and stated this would hinder future development.

KIERNAN MC KIERNAN, WEST HOLLYWOOD, has concerns regarding this item. He spoke regarding auxiliary units, and privacy. He stated enough analyses has not been done.

DOUGLAS BERNARD, WEST HOLLYWOOD has concerns regarding this item. He spoke regarding the new requirements for fences, hedges and trees.

WILLIAM DOEBLER, WEST HOLLYWOOD, has concerns regarding this item. He spoke regarding the new requirements for fences, hedges and trees.

RICHARD GIESBRET, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke in support of the proposed zoning changes for the West Hollywood West Overlay District.

LAUREN MEISTER, WEST HOLLYWOOD, support of the proposed zoning changes for the West Hollywood West Overlay District. She cautioned repetition of design and sated planners should not treat this as a check list.

VICTOR OMELCZENKO, WEST HOLLYWOOD, stated his support of the proposed zoning changes for the West Hollywood West Overlay District.

**THE FOLLOWING SUPPORT STAFF'S RECOMMENDATION OF PROPOSED ZONING CHANGES FOR THE WEST HOLLYWOOD WEST NEIGHBORHOOD, BUT CHOSE NOT TO PUBLICLY SPEAK:**

MICHAEL ZANNELLA, WEST HOLLYWOOD, RICHARD BLUNS, WEST HOLLYWOOD, RICHARD KARLISS, WEST HOLLYWOOD, SANFORD POLLACK, WEST HOLLYWOOD, MARJORIE POLLACK, WEST HOLLYWOOD, MARTIN STRUDLER, WEST HOLLYWOOD.

Commissioner Yeber stated what is presented in draft form is overly vague and could stand better definition, to provide clarity to all involved. He spoke regarding using the term "complementary" instead of "fit". He suggested it may be more useful to those involved. It would be beneficial if the introductory paragraph to the required findings has a reference to the design guidelines, as an intro or starting point. He cautioned about contradictory, or lines that could be interpreted as contradictory within the findings. The whole idea of the findings is to help us make our decisions legal proof. If they are vague, it doesn't help. He requested more clarity.

Commissioner Buckner stated the clearer this can be made, the less opportunity we have for falling into an abyss. She specified this is a huge undertaking, and can only be amended and changed as we go forward. This is a process.

Commissioner Shink stated she believes the late edition regarding the hedges should be removed from the conversation tonight. There is some ambiguity, vagueness and issues that have not been addressed. She stated her support for what has been presented and would move forward.

Chair Huebner stated his support. He specified it greatly improved the character and functionality of the architecture that will be required for development in the neighborhood. The accessory structure is a very important addition. He had concerns with the real world application process, but stated this would be a “beta test” or good to put in place and review down the line to see how it works.

**ACTION:** Continue to Thursday, October 16, 2014: **Motion carried by consensus of the Commission; noting Commissioner DeLuccio and Vice-Chair Aghaei recused and Commissioner Altschul absent.**

11. **NEW BUSINESS.** None.
12. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS.** None.
13. **EXCLUDED CONSENT CALENDAR.** None.
14. **ITEMS FROM STAFF.**
  - A. **Planning Manager’s Update.**  
David DeGrazia, Current and Historic Preservation Planning Manager, provided an update of upcoming projects.
15. **PUBLIC COMMENT.**  
VICTOR OMELCZENKO, WEST HOLLYWOOD, commented on zoning code revisions. He thanked Emily Stadnicki, Senior Planner for her service.
16. **ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS.**  
Chair Huebner wished Commissioner Shink an early happy birthday.
17. **ADJOURNMENT:** The Planning Commission adjourned at 10:40 P.M. to a regularly scheduled meeting which will be on Thursday, October 16, 2014 beginning at 6:30 P.M. until completion at West Hollywood Park Public Meeting Room – Council Chambers, 625 N. San Vicente Boulevard, West Hollywood, California. **Motion carried by consensus of the Commission.**

APPROVED BY A MOTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD ON THIS 16<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF OCTOBER, 2014.

  
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ROY HUEBNER, CHAIRPERSON

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
DAVID K. GILLIG, COMMISSION SECRETARY