



PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
Regular Meeting
February 19, 2015

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 6:35 P.M.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Clare Bronowski led the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. **ROLL CALL:**
Commissioners Present: Altschul, Buckner, DeLuccio, Shink, Yeber, Vice-Chair Aghaei, Chair Huebner.

Commissioners Absent: None.

Staff Present: Antonio Castillo, Associate Planner, Jennifer Alkire, Senior Planner, Stephanie Reich, Urban Designer, Bob Cheung, Senior Transportation Planner, David DeGrazia, Current and Historic Preservation Planning Manager, Michael Jenkins, City Attorney and David Gillig, Commission Secretary.
4. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA.**
ACTION: Approve the Planning Commission Agenda of Thursday, February 19, 2015 as presented. **Moved by Commissioner DeLuccio, seconded by Commissioner Shink and passes.**
5. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES.**
A. February 5, 2015

ACTION: Approve the Planning Commission regular meeting minutes of Thursday, February 5, 2015 as presented. **Moved by Commissioner DeLuccio, seconded by Vice-Chair Aghaei and passes.**
6. **PUBLIC COMMENT.**
GENEVIEVE MORRILL, MARINA DEL REY, President/CEO, West Hollywood Chamber of Commerce, stated the Annual Member Meeting and Board Installation (AMMBI) will be held at the Andaz Hotel on Thursday, March 5, 2015; 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. She encouraged participation in Eat Shop Play West Hollywood at www.eatshopplayweho.com

MICHAEL WOJTKIELEWICZ, WEST HOLLYWOOD, commented on zoning inequities regarding mixed-use buildings along commercial corridors, and public outreach regarding cell towers.

7. DIRECTOR'S REPORT.

Stephanie DeWolfe, Community Development Director presented the Director's Report.

At the City Council meeting on Monday, March 2, 2015, she stated the project located at 702-714 N. Doheny Drive was unanimously approved.

She clarified the proposed Metro site project, stating there has been an exclusive negotiating agreement between Metro and a local property owner. Staff took a recommendation to City Council requesting the council request that Metro let that exclusive negotiating agreement expire. The City Council agreed with staff's recommendation. Ultimately that item will come back through a community visioning and planning process for further discussion.

8. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS. None.

9. CONSENT CALENDAR. None.

10. PUBLIC HEARINGS.

A. 1013 N. Genesee Avenue:

Antonio Castillo, Associate Planner provided an oral and visual presentation and background information as presented in the staff report dated Thursday, February 19, 2015.

He presented a history of the project site and stated the proposed project is a request to construct an approximate 9,500-square-foot, seven-unit condominium building with four stories over a fully subterranean parking garage.

It is currently developed with a single-family dwelling and detached accessory structure registered as a rental unit; both constructed in 1921. The site was reviewed as part of the 2008 Historic Resources Survey and found not to be eligible for designation.

The project will be constructed with two one-bedroom units and five two-bedroom units, ranging in size between 802 square feet for a single bedroom to 1,858 square feet for the fourth floor penthouse.

The project exceeds a minimum 90 Green Building points and also includes one unit of on-site affordable housing. The Green Building Points earns the project one incentive, which the applicant has selected to use towards the requirement for common open spaces. In this case, the minimum 500-square-foot common open space will be divided and added to each unit's private open space.

The one affordable unit earns the project two concessions. However, the applicant has elected to only take advantage of one concession. For that concession, there is a request to increase the height of the building by a maximum of ten feet for an additional story at a maximum of forty-five feet. The fourth story is stepped back approximately twelve feet from the rest of the floors to create additional articulation.

In October 2014, the project was reviewed by the Planning Commission Design Review Subcommittee.

He recommended the Commission consider including two additional design-related conditions to draft resolution No. PC 15-1113; Condition 8.8 would pertain to the location and screening of utilities; and Condition 8.9 pertains to the requirement that all materials and details be of high quality and reviewed by the Urban Designer.

Stephanie Reich, Urban Designer presented the design review report. She stated the project is a handsome building that is appropriate for the site. There is a twenty-seven foot setback at the front that enables the street frontage to benefit by an open view to the building, with a generous open space and entry to the front unit activating the street.

The penthouse unit is set back from all sides, with a large terrace at the front; which wraps all sides. This helps to reduce the massing as viewed from the front. There is a vertical element with a gold colored tile that is central on the front elevation, and is proposed to incorporate the art piece.

The design of the building on the south side appears broken up with three-dimensional elements of stairs, horizontal balconies, glass railings and metal sculpted balconies. The north elevation may be flatter, but it is appropriate given that is directly adjacent to a two-story multi-family building.

Overall the massing of the project is appropriate, since the top floor is significantly set back, and the entire building is substantially set back from the street. The project employs a variety of detail and design elements that are organized, yet dynamic. They enliven the project while portraying a clear architectural expression.

Antonio Castillo, Associate Planner stated overall this proposal is well suited for this site and the surrounding neighborhood. Staff recommends that the Planning Commission approve the project request.

Commissioner Yeber requested clarification regarding the divided private space.

Commissioner DeLuccio requested clarification regarding the fourth floor setbacks.

Commissioner DeLuccio had no official disclosures.

Commissioner Shink had no official disclosures.

Commissioner Altschul had no official disclosures.

Vice-Chair Aghaei had no official disclosures.

Commissioner Buckner had no official disclosures.

Commissioner Yeber had no official disclosures.

Chair Huebner had no official disclosures

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

DEAN LARKIN, Dean Larkin Design, architect, presented the applicant's report. He provided a history of the design process and detailed the setbacks, parking, elevator, and neighborhood compatibility.

Commissioner Yeber questioned the garage access, and the height of the end stalls. He had concerns with the location and accessibility of the storage units in the parking area.

Antonio Castillo, Associate Planner stated the zoning requirement doesn't clarify accessibility or location(s).

Commissioner Yeber requested clarification regarding roof access and the location of the HVAC systems.

Commissioner DeLuccio requested clarification regarding the public art component and storage location.

Commissioner Shink questioned if the fourth floor casts shadows, and requested clarification regarding the art component.

DEAN LARKIN, Dean Larkin Design, architect, presented a solar study, and stated there is no significant impact to the neighbors. The art component is currently a work in progress and nothing has been confirmed.

JEANNE DOBRIN, WEST HOLLYWOOD has concerns regarding this item. She spoke regarding parking and questioned neighborhood zoning.

ADAM BASS, WEST HOLLYWOOD spoke in support of staff's recommendation of approval. He spoke regarding the upkeep of vacant neighborhood properties and requested a condition of approval that would prohibit occupants to receive off-street parking permits.

VICTOR OMELCZENKO, WEST HOLLYWOOD, opposes staff's recommendation of approval.

SHELLEY SPARKS, LOS ANGELES, landscape architect, presented the applicant's rebuttal. She spoke and detailed the landscaping design. She stated there are currently no protected trees on the site. Unfortunately, some of the trees on-site will be destroyed during the construction phase.

Commissioner Shink questioned if there is a way to modify the proposed tandem parking.

DEAN LARKIN, Dean Larkin Design, architect, detailed the parking measurements and stated these lots just do not have the capability to get the type of parking you normally see on a standard lot. They have done everything to ease the pain of tandem parking.

Commissioner Yeber requested clarification regarding the ramp slope.

Bob Cheung, Senior Transportation Planner stated a fifteen percent slope is preferred for a trash enclosure in the garage. However, twenty percent is the maximum that would be allowed. Exemptions are made through the Public Works Environmental Services Division.

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

Commissioner DeLuccio stated it is unfortunate the trees that will be lost. He confirmed the height of the building is allowed under SB 1818. He spoke how the applicant will not be paying into the one percent art fund; but instead they will be incorporating an actual design to the front of the building. He stated the building is well designed and he supports the generous setbacks. Based on the current zoning ordinance, it would be very difficult to deny this project.

Commissioner Shink had concerns with the tandem parking, and stated permit parking should be conditioned if this moves forward. She suggested a recommendation should be made to the Arts and Cultural Affairs Commission to look into the art component, and stated her concerns with buildings of this size and development on the eastside. She stated this project does comply with current zoning.

Commissioner Altschul commented on current planning codes and incentives that are now available for developers. He stated this is a very lovely project, well designed; and it makes wonderful use of the lot and area. He stated his support of approval.

Commissioner Yeber stated there is no valid reason not to approve this project. It currently meets the zoning code and regulations. He is not enamored with the design, stating there are some problems that need to be worked out as it moves forward. He would like to condition the accessibility of the storage units.

Commissioner Buckner stated this project does comply with current zoning codes, and qualifies for the additional height. The applicant has taken effort to reduce the massing and is well thought out. She supported the affordable housing unit, and questioned the affordability of a condition regarding no street parking for residents as part of a motion.

Commissioner DeLuccio moved to: 1) approve staff's recommendation of approval; with the following conditions: a) no preferential street parking permits allowed to tenants; b) explore the accessibility of the storage units; c) insert standard conditions 8.8 (screening of the utilities) and Condition 8.9 (quality of materials and design).

Seconded by Commissioner Buckner.

Vice-Chair Aghaei stated this is a well-designed project; and all concessions comply with city and state codes.

Chair Huebner stated his support of the project. It's a very simple, but refreshing design. It is appropriate for the neighborhood. He spoke regarding the setbacks and the fourth story. He had concerns with the glass railings and would like to see some opacity added.

Antonio Castillo, Associate Planner read the added conditions into the record. The following conditions will be added to draft resolution No. PC 15-1113:

- 1)
 - 8.8) **Location and screening of all utilities and equipment including: Fire Department Connections, backflow preventers, meters, etc. must be approved by the project Planner and the City's Urban Designer. The applicant shall coordinate with public utility agencies to appropriately place or screen all fixtures, utility boxes, fire department standpipes, etc., so that they do not interfere with public amenities or the public right-of-way, to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director;**
 - 2)
 - 8.9) **All materials and details shall be of high quality. Materials and details must be reviewed and approved by the City's Urban Designer prior to issuance of Building Permits including:**

- a. **Materials shall be the equal or better to those shown on drawings dated January 20, 2015 and which are those plans reviewed and approved by the Planning Commission at its meeting of February 19, 2015.**
 - b. **Details to be reviewed by the City's Urban Designer include: balcony and railing details, window and door details and typical and special corner conditions, details at all unique architectural elements.**
 - c. **Materials at the ground level should be of durable material and high quality.**
 - d. **All stucco shall be smooth finish. Rough or textured stucco shall not be used unless otherwise approved by the City's Urban Designer.**
 - e. **Vinyl windows shall not be used unless otherwise approved by Director of Community Development. Approval of vinyl windows requires review and approval of details, samples and product specifications by City's Urban Designer;**
- 3) **Prohibit the issuance of residential street parking passes; and**
 - 4) **staff shall work with the architect and applicant regarding the accessibility of the storage units.**

ACTION: 1) Approve the application; 2) Adopt Resolution No. PC 15-1113 as amended: "A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD, CONDITIONALLY APPROVING A DEMOLITION PERMIT AND DEVELOPMENT PERMIT, FOR THE DEMOLITION OF A SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENCE AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF A SEVEN-UNIT CONDOMINIUM BUILDING CONSISTING OF FOUR RESIDENTIAL STORIES OVER A SUBTERRANEAN PARKING GARAGE, LOCATED AT 1013 N. GENESEE AVENUE, WEST HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA;" 3) Adopt Resolution No. PC 15-1114 as presented: "A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD, CONDITIONALLY APPROVING A TENTATIVE TRACT MAP (MAJOR LAND DIVISION NO. 72881), FOR THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 1013 N. GENESEE AVENUE, WEST HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA;" and 4) Close Public Hearing Item 10.A. **Moved by Commissioner DeLuccio, seconded by Commissioner Buckner and unanimously passes.**

Commission Secretary Gillig officially read into the record the appeal procedure for 1013 N. Genesee Avenue, West Hollywood, California:

The Resolution the Planning Commission just approved memorializes the Commission's final action on this matter. This action is subject to appeal to the City Council. Appeals must be submitted within ten calendar days from this date, to the City Clerk's office. Appeals must be in writing and accompanied by the required fees. The City Clerk's office can provide appeal forms and information about waiver of fees.

THE COMMISSION TOOK A TWENTY (20) MINUTE RECESS AT 7:40 P.M. AND RECONVENED AT 8:00 P.M.

Commissioner DeLuccio recused himself from the meeting at this time; due to having a residence within 500' of the proposed project located at 8650 Melrose Avenue, West Hollywood, California.

B. 8650 Melrose Avenue:

Jennifer Alkire, Senior Planner provided an oral and visual presentation and background information as presented in the staff report dated Thursday, February 19, 2015.

She stated the proposed project is a request to amend entitlements that were granted by the city in 2011. The request includes placing the property within the Avenues Bonus Overlay District, and utilizes the height and density bonuses allowed in the Avenues Bonus. The request also includes a variance for location of an enclosed driveway at the southern property line. The proposed project includes office, retail and restaurant uses, with on and off-site parking.

She provided a history of the property, stating the original entitlement on this site was for a single-level building that was less than 10,000 square feet and was processed and approved at the staff level. The original entitlement includes an architectural projection; which is an unoccupied area above the allowed height; which brought the height of that building to a maximum of thirty-seven feet eight inches in a tower element at the corner of Melrose Avenue and Norwich Drive. The original entitlement also included a parking reduction of 50% or up to 31 spaces due to proximity to the public parking structure at the library.

The current request includes an increase in overall floor area of 8,968 square feet resulting in a total proposed building of 18,624 square feet. This is an FAR of 1.47, which is allowed with the base density of 1.0 in the CN2 zoning district and the Avenues bonus of an additional 0.5 FAR.

The current request is for a two-story building, with a maximum height of thirty-eight feet six inches. The height is achieved through the base height available in the CN2 zoning district of twenty-five feet, plus an additional ten feet through the Avenues Bonus and an additional 10% or, three and a half feet through a minor modification.

The avenues bonus includes the additional height to attract creative industry tenants, who generally require higher ceiling heights. The intent of the Avenues Bonus is to give incentives for buildings that would attract the arts and design industries that have been a major economic force in this part of West Hollywood.

In order to approve the Avenues Bonus for any site, there are eight criteria that must be addressed. Staff finds that each of those criteria has been met for the proposed project:

- a. The development is consistent with the City's General Plan;
- b. The height, floor area ratio, modulation, and setbacks create a development that is compatible with the character of Melrose Avenue;
- c. The development will contribute to and enhance the character of the neighborhood and foster an appropriate mix of uses including a pedestrian friendly environment in the vicinity of the development;
- d. The development does not result in detrimental impacts to existing or anticipated residential or commercial development in the vicinity of the project;
- e. The development incorporates quality architecture to enhance the arts, fashion, and design focus of the Avenues District; and
- f. The avenues bonus requires that the development includes public benefits.

The project includes a variance in order to allow the enclosure of a driveway ramp that is located at the southern property line. The code requires that any commercial structure be located a minimum of ten feet from a residential property. The property immediately south of the site is zoned R1B. However, the applicant has requested to enclose the driveway as a concession to the neighborhood. Staff supports the variance due to the irregular shape of the subject site which constricts the parking ramp and layout for subterranean parking.

Parking for the project includes thirty-four on site spaces in a subterranean level that was approved in the previous entitlement, as well as a previously-approved parking reduction of thirty-one spaces. The current request includes seventeen off-site parking spaces to be located at Restoration Hardware, 8564 Melrose Avenue.

Staff added the following conditions to draft Resolution No. PC 15-1108: prior to City Council review.

Condition 10.22) The parking operations plan required in condition 10.12 shall include the following measures:

- a. Tenants of the building shall provide free parking for all patrons of the project;

- b. Employees and tenants of the subject site shall park off-site. Employers and tenants may purchase parking at the West Hollywood Library - Municipal Parking Structure, or 1M Parking Permits if available (Parking Meters south of Melrose on the west side of San Vicente). In the event parking is not available at the City's Municipal Structure and if 1M permits are not available, employers and tenants shall purchase parking at the Pacific Design Center.
- c. Commercial Employee Parking Permits (1C) will not be available to this project.

Condition 3.15) Specifying the requirement for the \$200,000 public benefit to be paid prior to issuance of building permits.

Stephanie Reich, Urban Designer presented the design review report. She stated the project has been reviewed multiple times by the design review subcommittee and has improved dramatically since it was first submitted. In January 2015, the design review subcommittee reviewed the project again and agreed that it had improved a great deal. They asked for additional design modifications and did request that the project be reviewed by them prior to coming before the Planning Commission.

While the design has not been additionally reviewed, the modifications that were important to the subcommittee have all been included. As presented, the design represents quality architecture and meets the level required to receive the Avenues Bonus.

The project follows the shape of the site, the linear frontage at Melrose Avenue has a more linear design that is broken up with architectural elements alternating, projected and recessed. The façade has developed greater three dimensionality appeal since reviewed by the design review subcommittee. On the Norwich frontage the storefront is setback between bronze anodized piers, with landscaping between that will serve to soften the elevation and provide a rhythm along the street.

At the second floor is the “brise soleil”, following the curve of the street, which provides visual interest and also has an elegant quiet, appropriate to the different character of the street as it transitions from commercial to residential. The wood gate and enclosure for the parking ramp also helps the project transition to the residential neighborhood. Additional parkway planting along Norwich Drive would also benefit the streetscape.

Overall the project is designed with large and small modifications made over these many months has transformed into a design which enhances the Melrose streetscape while transitioning well to the Norwich Avenue frontage and is appropriate to its unique location presenting quality architecture.

Jennifer Alkire, Senior Planner stated this project meets the vision for the Avenues Bonus, and meets all of the required findings. The project has undergone many iterations to get to a point where staff can support it as quality architecture, and appropriate for the site.

Since the project includes changes to both the zoning ordinance and the zoning map, it will go before the city council for final approval.

Staff recommends the Planning Commission approve the project and recommend approval to the City Council.

Commissioner Yeber requested clarification regarding the parking operations plan, and the proposed use of the roof over the parking ramp.

Commissioner Altschul requested clarification regarding the number of parking spaces, and the required ten foot setback from a residence.

Commissioner Shink requested clarification regarding the usage of service vehicles in the parking garage.

Commissioner Buckner requested clarification regarding the outdoor dining space.

Commissioner Shink had no official disclosures.

Commissioner Altschul had no official disclosures.

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

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

Commissioner Yeber disclosed for the record he met with the applicant's representative, and residents at the site. They discussed matters contained in the staff report.

Chair Huebner disclosed for the record he met with the applicant's representative and architect. They discussed matters contained in the staff report.

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

CLARE BRONOWSKI, LOS ANGELES, applicant's representative, presented the applicants report. She provided a history of the property and spoke regarding the General Plan and the Avenues Bonus.

She detailed the commercial uses, community input and concerns; which included parking, traffic, and noise. She addressed privacy concerns, the driveway and parking ramp, aesthetics, visibility, the parking operations plan. Tenants and employees of the project would be required to obtain off-site monthly parking or obtain an M1 permit for daily use at meters on San Vicente Boulevard. All patrons and customers would be encouraged to walk, and on-site valet operations will occur within the subterranean garage.

She cited the traffic study, stating there would be no traffic impacts on Norwich Drive. They support any measure to ensure no further impacts on Norwich Drive and the surrounding neighborhood.

JAY REYNOLDS, LOS ANGELES, architect continued the applicant's report. He stated they have changed the articulation of the façade along Melrose Avenue, breaking it down in a very articulated fashion with lots of movement, dimensions, and materials. They tried to create a modern interpretation that is respectful of the street.. He detailed the height, massing, scaling, planters, landscaping and foliage, glass windows, and driveway specifics. He stated he hopes this is a building that will create vibrancy along Melrose Avenue.

Commissioner Buckner requested clarification and questioned the location and square-footage of the outdoor dining space on the sidewalk.

JAY REYNOLDS, LOS ANGELES, architect clarified the width of the sidewalk for the outdoor dining will be approximately eight feet. This is possible due the Avenues Design plan that is currently in the planning process.

Jennifer Alkire, Senior Planner confirmed the redesigned future sidewalk along Melrose Avenue will be between fifteen feet and forty-eight feet.

GARRY GUERRIER, WEST HOLLYWOOD spoke in support of staff's recommendation of approval of the project and to forward the recommendation of approval to the City Council.

LESLIE KARLISS, WEST HOLLYWOOD opposes staff's recommendation of approval of the project to City Council.

MANNY RODRIGUEZ, WEST HOLLYWOOD opposes staff's recommendation of approval of the project to City Council.

TOM FLEMING, WEST HOLLYWOOD has concerns regarding this item. He spoke regarding the Avenue Bonus criteria, and stated the building is out of scale for the neighborhood. He had additional concerns regarding parking and traffic. He requested the project be denied.

MELANIE LEVITT, WEST HOLLYWOOD opposes staff's recommendation of approval to City Council.

DANELLE LAVIN, WEST HOLLYWOOD spoke in support of staff's recommendation of approval of the project and to forward the recommendation of approval to the City Council.

AMOS NEWMAN, WEST HOLLYWOOD has concerns regarding this item. He spoke regarding massing, parking, traffic, driveway location, and the effect the project will have on the neighborhood.

BRAD KEISTLER, WEST HOLLYWOOD opposes staff's recommendation of approval of the project to City Council.

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

LAWRENCE CHAMBLEE, WEST HOLLYWOOD opposes staff's recommendation of approval of the project to City Council.

LUIS MARQUEZ, WEST HOLLYWOOD opposes staff's recommendation of approval of the project to City Council.

RICHARD DAVIDOFF, LOS ANGELES spoke in support of staff's recommendation of approval of the project and to forward the recommendation of approval to the City Council.

KIMBERLY WINICK, WEST HOLLYWOOD opposes staff's recommendation of approval of the project to City Council.

RICHARD GIESBRET, WEST HOLLYWOOD, opposes staff's recommendation of approval of the project to City Council.

ERIC ARBELOFF, WEST HOLLYWOOD opposes staff's recommendation of approval of the project to City Council.

KAI KOLODZIEJSKI, WEST HOLLYWOOD spoke in support of staff's recommendation of approval of the project and to forward the recommendation of approval to the City Council.

CARINE MAMANN, LOS ANGELES spoke in support of staff's recommendation of approval of the project and to forward the recommendation of approval to the City Council.

FRANCESCA RUZIN, WEST HOLLYWOOD spoke in support of staff's recommendation of approval of the project and to forward the recommendation of approval to the City Council.

MAX RADJI, LOS ANGELES spoke in support of staff's recommendation of approval of the project and to forward the recommendation of approval to the City Council.

ERIN CASTELINO, LOS ANGELES spoke in support of staff's recommendation of approval of the project and to forward the recommendation of approval to the City Council.

JAY LUCHS, LOS ANGELES spoke in support of staff's recommendation of approval of the project and to forward the recommendation of approval to the City Council.

LYNN RUSSELL, WEST HOLLYWOOD has concerns regarding this item. She spoke regarding the aesthetic value of the project. She requested denial of the project.

SIMON HICOCK, WEST HOLLYWOOD spoke in support of staff's recommendation of approval of the project and to forward the recommendation of approval to the City Council.

JEANNE DOBRIN, WEST HOLLYWOOD has concerns regarding this item. She spoke regarding the permitting process and stated the project should be denied.

VICTOR OMELCZENKO, WEST HOLLYWOOD opposes staff's recommendation of approval of the project to City Council.

LAUREN MEISTER, WEST HOLLYWOOD opposes staff's recommendation of approval of the project to City Council.

THE FOLLOWING DID NOT TO PUBLICLY SPEAK, BUT OPPOSE STAFF'S RECOMMENDATION OF THE PROJECT APPROVAL TO CITY COUNCIL:

RICHARD KARLISS, WEST HOLLYWOOD, DEBBIE MEISTER, WEST HOLLYWOOD, ROBERT GRANDINETTI, WEST HOLLYWOOD, JANET YONATY, WEST HOLLYWOOD, MICHAEL HAYDEN, WEST HOLLYWOOD, and HOWARD COTTON, WEST HOLLYWOOD.

CLARE BRONOWSKI, LOS ANGELES, applicant's representative, presented the applicants rebuttal. She spoke regarding the mass and scaling; stating the site is well proportioned. The building height along Melrose Avenue and Norwich Drive has been lowered. She detailed the setbacks and the roof element, stating there is no change in the foundation requirement for the two buildings. She commented on the in-lieu credit program, and confirmed they are not anticipating any U-turns according to the parking plan agreed to by staff. There are only seventeen parking spaces that will be utilized at Restoration Hardware.

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

Commissioner Altschul stated the design has come a long way from the first presentation, and it is now quite nice. However, the Norwich Drive side is far too intrusive and it takes the commercial aspect too far into the residential area. He stated it does not meet the neighborhood compatibility standard.

This project is not adequately parked, and suggested it may need a master environmental impact report. At the very minimum it would need a focused EIR on traffic and circulation for the area between the west ends of Melrose Avenue to La Cienega Boulevard.

He suggested the Planning Commission recommendation should be they do not adopt staff's recommendation and this should be put on hold until some kind of a master EIR can be compiled; so this developer's remaining undeveloped property, at least can be quantified and qualified as to what should take place with respect to neighborhood compatibility.

Commissioner Shink stated this project is over scaled to the adjacent residential properties, and the parking concerns need to be dealt with. There has to be a parking management plan. There are many parts of the Avenues Bonus criteria which need to be met; of which three do not. She commented on the Melrose Specific Plan. She acknowledged this is a work in progress, but she cannot support this project until some of these issues are addressed.

Commissioner Yeber commended the developer for his contributions to the city's economic energy and development zest. He stated there is nothing majorly wrong with this project. He indicated that it works on some levels, but it doesn't work on many others. He stated the traffic on Norwich Drive is a lot more significant than what is represented in the staff report.

He indicated the request is based on a false premise; stating this appears to be simply an amendment to an existing entitlement. Those overlay sites (target sites) that qualify for the Bonus have not been designated. The plans do not adequately reflect, or are contrary to certain conditions laid out in the staff report. He stated the scale of the building adjacent to the single-family residential is definitely not compatible. There needs to be some adjustment, variations or modulation in that scale to acknowledge the single-family residential to the south of the project.

He had concerns regarding the parking plan. He spoke and detailed the traffic patterns to get from one site to another. There are many parts of the Avenues Bonus criteria which need to be met; of which three do not. He stated he could not make a finding for the variance. It is a manmade challenge that does not represent what our variances are supposed to represent.

He stated his concerns regarding the delivery trucks and loading and unloading issues. The impacts are far too great to ask the local neighbors to accept. He could not support the project and suggested to make a motion to deny the recommendation.

Commissioner Buckner stated she could not support this project due to the overwhelming traffic and parking issues as it exists. She confirmed she could not support or vote for the Negative Declaration; stating it is terribly inappropriate for this particular project. In regards to the Avenues Bonus, she could not make a finding for the variance, of which three do not meet the criteria. She spoke about her concerns with mass and scale, inadequate parking, and traffic issues. She could not support staff's recommendation and suggested denial.

Vice-Chair Aghaei spoke on the various iterations of the design, stating it has come a long way. He affirmed you need to be cognizant of the impacts on the neighborhood, and commented on parking, walkability and traffic concerns.

Chair Huebner applauded the applicant for his development on Melrose Avenue; stating he has energized the street and given it an identity. He spoke regarding the design iterations and supports the current design; stating it is not that out of scale, and is sensitive to the neighborhood. He spoke regarding mass and scale, and the coverage of the parking ramp.

In respect to the Avenues Bonus, there is going to be an impact to the neighborhood. A more comprehensive look needs to be done on Melrose Avenue. He could not support staff's recommendation.

Commissioner Altschul moved to: 1) recommend staff's recommendation of approval to City Council, be denied in total; and 2) staff and City Council consider the proposed Specific Plan and a master environmental impact report (EIR) for Melrose Avenue; from Doheny Drive to La Cienega Boulevard.

Seconded by Commissioner Shink.

Michael Jenkins, City Attorney, requested the motion be amended: a) direct staff to return with a resolution of a recommendation of denial.

David DeGrazia, Current and Historic Preservation Planning Manager clarified the motion on the floor:

1) Bring back a draft resolution recommending staff's recommendation of approval be denied in total to City Council; and 2) direct staff and City Council to consider moving the proposed Specific Plan to an earlier date in the work plan schedule; which would include the preparation of a master environmental impact report (EIR) for Melrose Avenue; from Doheny Drive to La Cienega Boulevard.

ACTION: 1) Bring back a draft resolution recommending staff's recommendation of approval be denied in total to City Council; 2) direct staff and City Council to consider moving up the work plan for the proposed Specific Plan to an earlier date; which would include the preparation of a master environmental impact report (EIR) for Melrose Avenue; from Doheny Drive to La Cienega Boulevard; and 3) Close Public Hearing Item 10.B. **Moved by Commissioner Altschul, seconded by Commissioner Shink and passes, noting Commissioner DeLuccio recused.**

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.**

JEANNE DOBRIN, WEST HOLLYWOOD thanked the commission for denying the project located at 8650 Melrose Avenue.

RICHARD GIESBRET, WEST HOLLYWOOD requested a zone text amendment regarding prohibiting any type of open driveways approximate to any residential neighborhood, and spoke regarding in-lieu parking spaces.

VICTOR OMELCZENKO, WEST HOLLYWOOD commented on SB 1818, the appeal process, and a possible moratorium on future development.

16. **ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS.**

The commission thanked staff for their work and the public for participating in tonight's public hearings.

17. **ADJOURNMENT:** The Planning Commission adjourned at 10:15 P.M. to a regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, March 5, 2015 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.**

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED by the Planning Commission of the City of West Hollywood at a regular meeting held this 19th day of March, 2015 by the following vote:

AYES: Commissioner: Altschul, Shink, Yeber, Vice-Chair Aghaei, and Chair Huebner.

NOES: Commissioner: None.

ABSENT: Commissioner: Buckner.

ABSTAIN: Commissioner: DeLuccio.



ROY HUEBNER, CHAIRPERSON

ATTEST:



DAVID K. GILLIG, COMMISSION SECRETARY