



## PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

### Regular Meeting

### January 21, 2016

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

*THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD HAS ADOPTED SUMMARY AND ACTION MEETING MINUTES; WHICH PROVIDE A SUMMARY OF THE ACTIONS TAKEN AND POINTS OF DISCUSSION ONLY. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS OR DISCUSSION REGARDING ANY ITEM SUMMARIZED IN THESE MINUTES MAY BE OBTAINED BY VIEWING THE ARCHIVED VIDEOS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION MEETINGS AT [www.weho.org/weho-tv/other-city-meetings](http://www.weho.org/weho-tv/other-city-meetings)*

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Altschul called the meeting of the Planning Commission to order at 6:33 P.M.

2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** David Aghaei led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. **ROLL CALL:**

Commissioners Present: Buckner, DeLuccio, Huebner, Jones, Lightfoot, Vice-Chair Aghaei, Chair Altschul.

Commissioners Absent: None.

Staff Present: Antonio Castillo, Associate Planner, Stephanie Reich, Urban Design, David DeGrazia, Current and Historic Preservation Planning Manager, Lauren Langer, Acting Assistant City Attorney, and David Gillig, Commission Secretary.

4. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA.**

**ACTION:** Approve the Planning Commission Agenda of Thursday, January 21, 2016 as presented. **Moved by Commissioner DeLuccio, seconded by Vice-Chair Aghaei, and unanimously passes.**

5. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES.**

A. **December 3, 2015** (verbatim transcription)

**ACTION:** Approve the Planning Commission regular meeting minutes of Thursday, December 3, 2015 as presented. **Moved by Commissioner Buckner, seconded by Commissioner Jones and passes, noting Commissioner Huebner ABSTAINED.**

6. **PUBLIC COMMENT.**

KATHERINE GARDNER, WEST HOLLYWOOD, stated her support of Consent Calendar Item 9.A. -1271 N. Fairfax Avenue, West Hollywood, California.

**The following people did not wish to speak, but submitted citizen position slips in support of Consent Calendar Item 9.A. – 1271 N. Fairfax Avenue, West Hollywood, California:**

*Kathleen Davidson, Los Angeles, and Matt Tabak, Los Angeles.*

DAN MORIN, WEST HOLLYWOOD spoke regarding Consent Calendar Item 9.A. -1271 N. Fairfax Avenue, West Hollywood, California.

**7. DIRECTOR'S REPORT.**

John Keho, Assistant, Community Development Director presented the Director's Report.

City Council Meeting - Tuesday, January 19, 2016:

City Council directed staff to look at a possible Craftsman Historic District on Lexington Avenue; between Genesee Avenue and Curson Avenue. Planning staff was also directed to work with housing on Innovative Housing Types and Policy; regarding other creative ways housing can be created within the city.

City Council approved the zone text and Sunset Specific Plan amendment regarding the temporary off-site signage for the Sunset Specific Plan.

City Council denied the Appeal and upheld the Planning Commission's approval for 8017-8029 Norton Avenue project.

He provided an update and overview regarding the project at 8150 Sunset Boulevard, Los Angeles, California, and confirmed the joint meeting with City Council is scheduled for Tuesday, February 16, 2016 at 5:00 p.m.

**8. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS.**

Commissioner Jones stated several commissioners and staff will be attending the Land Use Law and Planning Conference on Friday, January 22, 2016.

**9. CONSENT CALENDAR.**

**A. 1271 N. Fairfax Avenue:**

The Planning Commission directed staff to return with a draft resolution denying a wireless telecommunications facility within an existing church bell tower with associated equipment at grade.

Lauren Langer, Assistant City Attorney, stated for the record Commissioner Lightfoot had some concerns, stating the draft resolution did not reflect one fact. The proposed project does not comply with certain parts of the West Hollywood Municipal Code; which is relevant to one of the findings for the conditional use permit (Finding A) of draft Resolution No. PC 15-1161; Section 4.

She clarified and read into the record the language Commissioner Lightfoot has requested to be added to the draft resolution:

*“Additionally, without the variance to deviate from the eighty-foot requirement, the proposal does not meet all applicable provisions of the Zoning Ordinance. Similarly, the record is not clear that there are no other wireless transmission facilities within 1,000 feet from the proposed site, or that the applicant made a good faith effort to co-locate with any existing facilities. Therefore, the Commission cannot make conditional use permit finding A that the proposal meets all code requirement.”*

Commissioner Buckner noted for the record the following sentence should read as follows in draft Resolution No. PC 15-1161; Section 5: “ ...*The Planning Commission has determined that the finding stating that there are exceptional or extraordinary circumstances ... “*

**ACTION:** 1) Adopt Resolution No. PC 15-1161 as amended: “A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD, DENYING WITHOUT PREJUDICE A MINOR CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT AND A VARIANCE TO ALLOW THE INSTALLATION OF A WIRELESS TELECOMMUNICATIONS FACILITY WITHIN AN EXISTING CHURCH BELL TOWER WITH ASSOCIATED EQUIPMENT AT GRADE, LOCATED AT 1271 N. FAIRFAX AVENUE, WEST HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA.” **Moved by Commissioner DeLuccio, seconded by Commissioner Lightfoot and unanimously passes.**

## 10. PUBLIC HEARINGS.

### A. 950 N. Ogden Drive and 7760 Romaine Street

Officially continued from Thursday, November 19, 2015.

Antonio Castillo, Associate Planner, provided a verbal and visual presentation and background information as presented in the staff report dated Thursday, January 21, 2016.

He stated the applicant is requesting to demolish five residential rental units on two adjoining corner lots, merge both lots and construct ten, three-story, market rate condominium units above a fully subterranean parking garage.

The project will be a high achieving Green Building project, with a minimum 90 points under the City’s Green Building Point System.

The combined lot includes an approximately 13,000-square-foot site within the R3B medium-density zone.

The project was reviewed by the Planning Commission Design Review Subcommittee in August 2015. Overall, the subcommittee members believed the project was well designed and were supportive of the project’s compatibility with the neighborhood.

Stephanie Reich, Urban Designer presented the design review report. She stated the design review subcommittee was impressed with the project; commenting that it broke the project up into two separate buildings that relate well to each other; but each has its own distinct impression on the street. There is a repetition of townhouses that is pleasing, as well as the differentiation between the two buildings that softens that repetition.

She spoke regarding the trees, landscaping, and parking. Staff is in support of the revised design. There are some tweaks to the project that are recommended conditions; including embellishing the space between the two buildings as well as the end walls facing the side-yard (front) where there is proposed artwork.

She stated the challenge is the Arts and Cultural Affairs Commission, which approves the artwork separate from the Planning Commission approval of the building. She indicated there is currently a space holder on the wall intended for the art work. If art does not go into that space, staff is concerned that there will not be enough interest. There is a condition in the draft resolution to address that concern and staff feels confident to address that issue if needed.

Antonio Castillo, Associate Planner stated since the project's continuance on November 19, 2015, the applicant has made some revisions to the project to address mostly ADA accessibility, including redesigning the parking garage to be fully subterranean. In doing so, the building height was reduced by four feet for a total height of 31 feet, the entry stoops were removed, and the roof structures were reduced in size. With the redesigned parking garage, the project now includes all parking spaces within the garage, including three guest spaces, one more than the minimum required, and two of which are ADA accessible.

The parking garage provides a single entry driveway along Ogden Drive and a single exit driveway along Genesee Avenue.

The project will also dedicate a surface easement along the frontage on Ogden Drive and the entire length of Romaine Street to accommodate a 10-foot sidewalk and landscaped parkway along Ogden Drive and Romaine Street. This will introduce nine new parkway trees.

It is staff's assessment that this proposal is well suited for this site and the surrounding neighborhood. This project will provide 10 residential units; a net increase of five housing units to the City's housing stock. The project provides high-achieving green building design, is complementary to the context of the neighborhood and meets the intent of the development standards for residential buildings in this zoning district. Overall, the proposal is well suited for this site and the surrounding neighborhood. As proposed and as conditioned, the required findings can be satisfied.

Staff recommends that the Commission approve the project request, subject to the findings and conditions of approval set forth in the draft Resolution.

Commissioner DeLuccio commented on the trip generation numbers and stated it does not list how many more trips this project would generate. He would like to see these numbers reported in the future.

Antonio Castillo, Associate Planner stated the existing has a daily trip of 48 for five units. Increasing it by five units will increase the daily trips to 58. There would be no additional impact at peak hours.

Commissioner Huebner requested clarification regarding the rear yard setbacks.

Antonio Castillo, Associate Planner stated the rear yard setbacks are actually the side-yard setbacks at 6 feet.

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

MARGARET TAYLOR, LOS ANGELES, applicant's representative, presented the applicants report. She provided a history of the property and spoke regarding neighborhood meetings and noticing, landscaping planters, pedestrian pathways, parkway, subterranean parking, guest parking, bicycle parking, screened access, elevator lift to the parking garage for disabled accessibility, stairwells and roof structures, and massing and building height. She requested approval.

DAN MORIN, WEST HOLLYWOOD, opposes staff's recommendation of approval.

MARGARET TAYLOR, LOS ANGELES, applicant's representative, presented the applicants rebuttal. She confirmed for the record they have coordinated with the housing department and will make sure they are in compliance with any and all regulations. She stated they have hired an art consultant and will continue through that process.

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

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

**Seconded by Commissioner Huebner.**

Commissioner DeLuccio commented on the Ellis Act. He spoke regarding the height and massing, stating it will be compatible with the neighboring buildings. It is a well-designed project and he stated his support.

Chair Altschul questioned whether the applicant had complied with the Ellis Act and if the Rent Stabilization and Housing Department had been involved with the process.

Antonio Castillo, Associate Planner stated both staff and the applicant have been in communication with the Rent Stabilization Department.

Commissioner Buckner commented on the Ellis Act. She stated she was impressed with the setback along Romaine Street, and spoke regarding the subterranean parking, landscaping, and design. She stated her support of the project.

Commissioner Huebner stated the design review subcommittee liked the project. He stated the project has improved and commented on the subterranean parking, setbacks, landscaping, and artwork. He stated this will be a great addition to the neighborhood. He stated his support of the project.

Commissioner Jones stated she would like to see more definition; perhaps windows in the interior breezeway area. She stated her support of the project.

Commissioner Lightfoot requested confirmation regarding the merged lots and questioned whether one inclusionary fee was paid for both buildings. She spoke regarding the loss of rent-stabilized housing. She stated the applicants have done many things right with this project and commended them for all the changes that were made. She stated it is a much improved project. She commented on the lower height and spoke regarding neighborhood capability.

She had concerns with the area between the buildings, and would hope that ends up being a pretty area and something that is really nice for the street. She questioned if something could be done in order to break up the roof extensions. She suggested perhaps high windows. She stated her support of the project.

Antonio Castillo, Associate Planner confirmed there would be one housing in-lieu fee for one project.

Commissioner DeLuccio questioned if the design concerns can be properly addressed.

Stephanie Reich, Urban Designer confirmed staff will work with the architect to address the design issues, and the current conditions are adequate.

Chair Altschul questioned if there has been a formal lot tie.

Antonio Castillo, Associate Planner stated the lot tie will be presented as part of the final tract map. He confirmed this is conditioned in the draft resolution.

**ACTION:** 1) Approve the application; 2) Adopt Resolution No. PC 15-1163 as presented: "A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD, CONDITIONALLY APPROVING A DEMOLITION PERMIT AND A DEVELOPMENT PERMIT FOR THE DEMOLITION OF FIVE RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURES ON TWO ADJOINING PARCELS AND CONSTRUCTION OF TWO FIVE-UNIT RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS EACH CONSISTING OF THREE RESIDENTIAL STORIES OVER A SUBTERRANEAN PARKING GARAGE, LOCATED AT 950 N. OGDEN DRIVE, WEST HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA AND 7760 ROMAINE STREET, WEST HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA;" 3) Adopt Resolution No. PC 15-1154 as presented: "A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD, CONDITIONALLY APPROVING A TENTATIVE TRACT MAP (MAJOR LAND DIVISION NO. 73612), FOR THE PROPERTIES LOCATED AT 950 N. OGDEN DRIVE, WEST HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA AND 7760 ROMAINE STREET, WEST HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA", and 4) Close Public Hearing Item 10.A. **Moved by Commissioner DeLuccio, seconded by Commissioner Huebner, and unanimously passes.**

Commission Secretary Gillig officially read into the record the appeal procedure for 950 N. Ogden Drive and 7760 Romaine Street, 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.*

**B. 1280 N. Sweetzer Avenue**

Proposed is a request to demolish all structures on-site and construct a new four-story, nine-unit condominium building with one affordable housing unit, with a variance for reduction of the required front yard setback.

Applicant has requested a continuance to a date uncertain to obtain further direction from the Los Angeles County Fire Department.

**ACTION:** 1) Continue to a date uncertain. **Motion carried by consensus of the Commission.**

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 stated the joint meeting with City Council and Planning Commission will be on Tuesday, February 16, 2016 at 5:00 p.m.

15. **PUBLIC COMMENT.**

DAN MORIN, WEST HOLLYWOOD commented on the lack of public participation.

16. **ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS.**

Commissioner Lightfoot suggested a discussion item be brought forward regarding having early neighborhood meetings with developers. She had concerns with the 500' radius listings and requested a procedural outline for the 500' radius notices.

Commissioner Jones announced there are two meetings regarding the City of West Hollywood's Housing Goals and Programs. Thursday, January 21, 2016 at Plummer Park and Monday, January 25, 2016; 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. in the West Hollywood Community Meeting Room.

Commissioner DeLuccio requested clarification regarding the timelines for neighborhood meetings and noticing.

David DeGrazia, Current and Historic Preservation Planning Manager stated developers need to have a neighborhood meeting within sixty days of submittal; regardless if the application has been deemed complete or incomplete. Noticing goes to both owners and occupants (tenants).

17. **ADJOURNMENT:** The Planning Commission adjourned at 7:30 P.M. to a regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, February 4, 2016 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 4<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2016 by the following vote:

AYES: Commissioner: Buckner, DeLuccio, Huebner, Jones, Lightfoot,  
Vice-Chair Aghaei, Chair Altschul.

NOES: Commissioner: None.

ABSENT: Commissioner: None.

ABSTAIN: Commissioner: None.

  
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JOHN ALTSCHUL, CHAIRPERSON

ATTEST:

  
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DAVID K. GILLIG, COMMISSION SECRETARY