



PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
Regular Meeting
May 5, 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

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Altschul called the meeting of the Planning Commission to order at 6:35 P.M.

2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** John Keho led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. **ROLL CALL:**

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

Commissioners Absent: Huebner.

Staff Present: Jennifer Alkire, Senior Planner, Stephanie Reich, Urban Designer, David DeGrazia, Current and Historic Preservation Planning Manager, Lauren Langer, Acting Assistant City Attorney and David Gillig, Commission Secretary.

4. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA.**

Chair Altschul confirmed Item 10.B. – Zone Text Amendment; Art on Construction Fencing will be continued to a date uncertain.

ACTION: Approve the Planning Commission Agenda of Thursday, May 5, 2016 as presented. **Moved by Commissioner Lightfoot, seconded by Vice-Chair Aghaei and passes, noting Commissioner Huebner absent.**

5. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES.**

A. **March 17, 2016**

ACTION: Approve the Planning Commission regular meeting minutes of Thursday, March 17, 2016 as presented. **Moved by Commissioner Buckner, seconded by Commissioner Jones and passes, noting Commissioner Huebner absent.**

6. **PUBLIC COMMENT.** None.

7. DIRECTOR'S REPORT.

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

He presented an update on three projects the Planning Division has been working on: 1) Commercial Historic Survey; 2) development standards and other related issues for the multifamily zones; and 3) design guidelines for the Norma Triangle.

8. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS.

Commissioner Jones thanked staff for the updates on the website and in the Council Chambers regarding the role of the Planning Commission. She stated she hopes this will help the public in understanding the additional responsibilities the Planning Commission assumes.

Chair Altschul commented on the issues surrounding the upcoming LA Pride Parade 2016, stating it is offensive and it should be further looked into.

9. CONSENT CALENDAR.

A. Community Development Work Plan.

The Planning Commission received the 2016 work plan for the Community Development Department, including a multi-year schedule for major initiatives.

Commissioner Lightfoot thanked staff for this item and suggested the community take the time to look through this item if they are interested in what the city and the Community Development Department will be doing in the next four years. She requested this staff report be retained on-line.

Commissioner Lightfoot requested clarification regarding the listed prioritizations.

Commissioner DeLuccio questioned if the report can be retained on-line under the Community Development Department.

David DeGrazia, Current & Historic Preservation Planning Manager stated staff can put a separate link to this item.

ACTION: Receive and file. **Moved by Commissioner DeLuccio, seconded by Commissioner Jones and passes, noting Commissioner Huebner absent.**

10. PUBLIC HEARINGS.

A. 916 Westbourne Drive

Officially continued from Thursday, March 17, 2016. Jennifer Alkire, Senior Planner provided a verbal and visual presentation and background information as presented in the staff report dated Thursday, May 5, 2016.

She stated this item was continued to allow the applicant to further refine the plans and materials to be more consistent. No major changes were made to the project during that time.

The proposed project is an eight-unit multi-family residential building. The project is proposed at four stories and forty-five feet in height, and contains eighteen parking spaces, including two guest parking spaces; sixteen spaces are provided in tandem configuration, and two spaces are provided as single spaces.

Staff finds that with the conditions added for additional detail review during concurrent plan check, the project can be supported.

Stephanie Reich, Urban Designer stated the applicant has worked with staff and has responded to the Design Review Subcommittee comments, which results in a project that is uniquely designed for the project site. Overall the design is one of the more interesting designs. Staff supports the project design.

Jennifer Alkire, Senior Planner reiterated the project design will be strongly scrutinized during the concurrent plan check for design details and further development.

Commissioner Lightfoot requested clarification regarding the "bump-outs". She questioned if any tenants have been ellised, and if any shade study impacts were done for the building to the north of the project.

Jennifer Alkire, Senior Planner stated there were two tenants ellised in 2007, and there was no shade and shadow analysis required.

Commissioner DeLuccio questioned if staff is acceptable to the elevation and articulation to the north side of the project.

Stephanie Reich, Urban Designer stated the north side is less visible, however, not much more can be done due to fire department requirements. The Design Review Subcommittee and staff were very positive in their recommendation.

Vice-Chair Aghaei stated how the design review subcommittee was satisfied and stated he is pleased with the development.

Chair Altschul stated the project is adequate.

Commissioner Jones questioned if this project is being proposed as rentals.

Jennifer Alkire, Senior Planner confirmed the project is being submitted as rentals.

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

DON RANDALL, WEST HOLLYWOOD, applicant, presented the applicants report. He provided a history of the property and detailed the substandard lot size and irregular shape. He spoke regarding the neighboring properties, common open space, massing, building characteristics, roof top gardens, subterranean parking, and materials.

Commissioner Buckner questioned the parking spaces.

DON RANDALL, WEST HOLLYWOOD, applicant, stated all parking spaces are tandem, except guests parking spaces.

Commissioner Lightfoot requested clarification regarding the "bump-outs".

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

Commissioner Buckner stated her support of the project.

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

Seconded by Commissioner DeLuccio.

Commissioner Jones stated her concerns regarding the parking. She could not support a project that cannot be parked properly. She also had concerns regarding the staging of the trash, and the size and safety of the side yard setback. She would like to see other options available regarding the variance.

Commissioner Lightfoot commented on the reasoning of granting variances, and stated the requested variances are not warranted. She had concerns with the plans and setbacks, and roof top covered stairwells. She stated she would deny the variance.

Vice-Chair Aghaei questioned architectural projections into the setbacks.

Commissioner Buckner requested further clarification regarding granting variances.

Lauren Langer, Acting Assistant City Attorney affirmed the findings says, there has to be an exceptional or extraordinary circumstances or conditions applicable to the property; including size, shape, topography, location, or surroundings, which do not generally apply to the surrounding properties in the same zone, and which deny the owner privileges enjoyed by other property owners in the vicinity.

Commissioner DeLuccio stated he is comfortable with the definition of the variance implying it to this project. He questioned why the applicant is asking for a variance, instead of a modification.

Vice-Chair Aghaei stated this is a tricky site, which includes the size, shape, topography, and location. He stated his concerns with the design coming out as rendered. Given the complexities of this site and the thresholds the applicant has had to overcome, he stated his support of the project.

Chair Altschul commented on the massing, height, size, topography, and neighboring units. He is uncertain if it meets the findings.

Discussion was held regarding the requested variance, lot size, possible modifications, and different options available if the motion does not pass.

Commissioner Lightfoot stated her concerns with the side setbacks.

MOTION FAILS ON THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES: Commissioners Buckner, DeLuccio, Vice-Chair Aghaei.

NOES: Commissioners Jones, Lightfoot, Chair Altschul.

Vice-Chair Aghaei made a second motion and moved to: 1) approve the project with an exemplary architectural waiver for the front yard setback, 2) allow a 10% modification on the side yard setback, 3) roof top stairwells shall be setback as required by code; and 4) deny the variance.

Seconded by Commissioner DeLuccio.

Lauren Langer, Acting Assistant City Attorney stated there must be findings presented to deny the variance.

Chair Altschul stated they have not met the burden, and requested an amended resolution be brought back with the requested changes.

Commissioner Jones requested clarification regarding exemplary design.

Discussion and debate was held regarding exemplary design and architectural projections.

ACTION: Bring back a resolution of approval with the following changes: 1) Deny the variance for the southern side yard setback and additional six-foot front yard setback above the first floor; 2) approve a 10% modification for reduction of the southern side yard setback; 3) waiver of the requirement for an additional six-foot front yard setback above the first floor with the finding that the project is of exemplary design; 4) rooftop access stairs shall meet the setback requirement from the edge of the roof; and 5) further refinement to the north façade of the building. **Moved by Vice-Chair Aghaei, seconded by Commissioner DeLuccio, and passes, noting Commissioner Jones and Commissioner Lightfoot voting NO, and Commissioner Huebner absent.**

B. Zone Text Amendment

Art on Construction Fencing:

Officially noticed and continued from Thursday, April 21, 2016.

An amendment to the Zoning Ordinance that will introduce new standards that require art to be installed on construction fencing for certain commercial development projects.

Staff requests to continue the public hearing item noting additional time is needed to evaluate the art approval process.

ACTION: 1) Continue to a date uncertain. **Moved by Commissioner Lightfoot, seconded by Vice-Chair Aghaei and passes as part of the approved agenda, noting Commissioner Huebner 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 & Historic Preservation Planning Manager stated the next meeting on Thursday, May 19, 2016 is cancelled. The next regular meeting will be on Thursday, June 2, 2016.

15. **PUBLIC COMMENT.** None.

16. **ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS.** None.

17. **ADJOURNMENT:** Noting the cancellation of the Planning Commission meeting on Thursday, May 19, 2016, the Planning Commission adjourned at 7:35 P.M. to a regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, June 2, 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 2nd day of June 2016 by the following vote:

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

NOES: Commissioner: None.

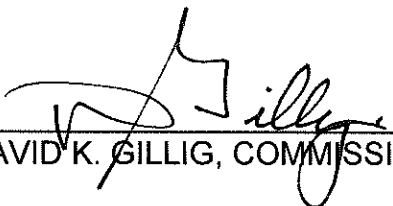
ABSENT: Commissioner: None.

ABSTAIN: Commissioner: Huebner.



JOHN ALTSCHUL, CHAIRPERSON

ATTEST:



DAVID K. GILLIG, COMMISSION SECRETARY