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**REGULAR PLANNING MINUTES**

**JUNE 30, 2008**

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**MINUTES**

**REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**

**JUNE 30, 2008**

1. **CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

A regular meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Rolling Hills Estates was called to order at 7:30 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers, 4045 Palos Verdes Drive North, by CHAIRMAN CONWAY.

2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

COMMISSIONER SOUTHWELL led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

3. **ROLL CALL**

Commissioners Present: O'Day, Southwell, Bayer, Rein, Scott, Chairman Conway  
Commissioners Absent: Golida  
Staff Present: Planning Director Wahba, Associate Planner Thom,  
Assistant Planner Masters

4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

COMMISSIONER BAYER moved, seconded by COMMISSIONER O'DAY,

TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING OF JUNE 2, 2008.

There being no objection, CHAIRMAN CONWAY so ordered.

5. **AUDIENCE ITEMS**

None.

6. **CONSENT CALENDAR**

None.

7. **BUSINESS ITEMS**

A. PLANNING APPLICATION NO. 13-08; APPLICANT: MR. CHRIS GIORDANO; LOCATION: 80 DAPPLEGRAY LANE; A NEIGHBORHOOD COMPATIBILITY DETERMINATION FOR FIRST AND SECOND STORY ADDITIONS TO AN EXISTING SINGLE-STORY HOME. MINOR DEVIATIONS ARE REQUIRED TO 1) DECREASE THE REQUIRED FRONT YARD AREA BY LESS THAN 10%; AND 2) DECREASE THE SIDE YARD SETBACK BY 10%.

Assistant Planner Masters gave a brief Staff Report, as per written material, and recommended approval.

COMMISSIONER REIN and Assistant Planner Masters discussed the square footage with and without the garage.

COMMISSIONER SCOTT pointed out that the dimension used for the garage may be in error, and the Staff Report underestimates the lot coverage.

COMMISSIONER REIN asked how many two-story homes are in the neighborhood, and Planning Director Wahba responded that there is a precedent of two-story homes sprinkled throughout neighborhood, including split-levels that appear as single-level.

CHRIS GIORDANO (applicant) came forward at CHAIRMAN CONWAY'S invitation and summarized the changes made to the project.

COMMISSIONERS BAYER and CONWAY commended the applicant and Staff for working together to come to a resolution so quickly. COMMISSIONER O'DAY agreed, adding that the new design is more livable with a good layout.

COMMISSIONER BAYER moved, seconded by COMMISSIONER O'DAY,

TO APPROVE PA-13-08 WITH THE CONDITIONS AS OUTLINED IN THE STAFF REPORT.

AYES: O'Day, Bayer, Scott, Chairman Conway  
NOES: Southwell, Rein  
ABSTAIN: None  
ABSENT: Golido

Planning Director Wahba explained the 20-day appeal period.

B. PLANNING APPLICATION NO. 15-08; APPLICANT: DEBRA BEST;  
LOCATION: 39 SILVER SADDLE LANE; A NEIGHBORHOOD COMPATIBILITY DETERMINATION FOR ONE AND TWO-STORY ADDITIONS TO AN EXISTING SINGLE-STORY RESIDENCE.

Associate Planner Thom gave a brief Staff Report, as per written material, and recommended approval.

COMMISSIONER O'DAY and Planning Director Wahba discussed the rear railing material.

COMMISSIONER SCOTT asked whether there was any commentary from the neighbor next door to the downhill side, and Associate Planner Thom responded that there has been no correspondence. COMMISSIONER SCOTT and Planning Director Wahba then discussed whether there were any privacy issues associated with the second floor balcony.

COMMISSIONER O'DAY stated that the materials for windows and siding should all match.

CHAIRMAN CONWAY commented that the total increase of 49% is very close to complying with existing setback requirements and asked whether the applicant could go back in with another 49% and not have to comply. Planning Director Wahba responded that Neighborhood Compatibility and lot coverage requirements would prevent it.

COMMISSIONER SCOTT and Associate Planner Thom discussed the lot width.

Mechas Grinell, (architect, 349 29th Street, Hermosa Beach) came forward at CHAIRMAN CONWAY'S invitation and summarized the difficulties with the design and the conditions of the lot. She also specified that house style will match (new and old) all the way around.

Debra Best (applicant) came forward and thanked the Commission and discussed the project, the landscaping, the neighbors and other homes in the area.

COMMISSIONER REIN commented that the project is in a neighborhood of fairly small houses, and 93% are smaller than what is proposed. This project, because of its size, puts it at the high end of the neighborhood, with only 7% being larger. The neighborhood consists of modest houses, and this one is pushing the envelope.

COMMISSIONER SOUTHWELL agreed, adding that there are only 3 lots in the entire neighborhood that are smaller than have a larger house than this house, out of 221 houses. It is pushing the envelope as far as the living space as a ratio to lot size. There's a tendency on this part of Silver Saddle to be a cluster of larger homes.

COMMISSIONER BAYER commented that the Neighborhood Compatibility criteria don't specifically address square footage, but scale, neighborhood character, style, privacy and natural amenities. There are other homes that are larger, so it's difficult to say it's not compatible because it's too large.

CHAIRMAN CONWAY added that the coverage of this project falls right in the middle of what would be appropriate for the neighborhood.

COMMISSIONER REIN pointed out that the Neighborhood Compatibility criteria states that the design should minimize the appearance of overbuilt property, and the square footage of the residence and total lot coverage should reflect the rural character of the city and the neighborhood, which is not quantitative but qualitative. However, rural means farmland, not suburbs, which would require erring in the direction of less coverage rather than more coverage.

COMMISSIONER SOUTHWELL added that there is an incrementalism toward increase in size that is eroding the rural character, and it's important to look at the extremes of the neighborhoods because over time you stairstep up.

COMMISSIONER SCOTT commented that the design has gone to a five-bedroom house and kept the square footage down to 3100 square feet. They've done a very good job of not overbuilding the site, keeping the style and intent. The 1400 square foot houses will not be remodeled to be 1400 square feet but will grow over time. A quarter of the houses are above 2500 square feet, and it's a tastefully done and in keeping with the neighborhood.

COMMISSIONER O'DAY stated that this house was close to the edge, but it fell to the side that can be approved and supported. Although the applicant is pushing the envelope, it falls within the acceptable range.

COMMISSIONER O'DAY moved, seconded by COMMISSIONER BAYER,

TO APPROVE PA-15-08 WITH THE CONDITIONS AS OUTLINED IN THE STAFF REPORT AND THE ADDITIONAL CONDITION THAT THE SIDING AND WINDOWS MATCH TO STAFF'S SATISFACTION.

AYES: O'Day, Bayer, Scott, Chairman Conway  
NOES: Southwell, Rein  
ABSTAIN: None  
ABSENT: Golida

Planning Director Wahba explained the 20-day appeal period.

8. PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.

9. COMMISSION ITEMS

COMMISSIONER BAYER stated that there has been no progress at the house on Bluemound, and the house on Willowood before Silver Spur did some major renovation and is now just sitting there. COMMISSIONER REIN advised that someone is now living at the house on Willowood, so it should be finished soon.

10. DIRECTOR'S ITEMS

Planning Director Wahba advised that he will not be at the July 14 meeting, but Senior Planner Cutler will be in attendance.

11. MATTERS OF INFORMATION

A. CITY COUNCIL ACTIONS (JUNE 24, 2008).

COMMISSIONER BAYER moved, and COMMISSIONER REIN seconded,  
TO RECEIVE AND FILE ITEM 11A.

There being no objection, CHAIRMAN CONWAY so ordered.

12. ADJOURNMENT

At 8:15 p.m. CHAIRMAN CONWAY adjourned the Planning Commission meeting to July 14, 2008, at 7:30 p.m.

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Julie Cremeans  
Minutes Secretary

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Douglas R. Prichard  
City Clerk