

MINUTES

REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

JULY 1, 2002

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 ZERUNYAN.

2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

CHAIRMAN ZERUNYAN led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

3. **ROLL CALL**

Commissioners Present: Rein, Killen, Somers, Conway
Chairman Zerunyan

Commissioners Absent: Bayer, Vullo

Staff Present: Director Orci
Assistant Planner Wong
Assistant Planner Tran

4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

COMMISSIONER CONWAY moved, seconded by COMMISSIONER KILLEN

TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING of June 3, 2002.

There being no objection, CHAIRMAN ZERUNYAN so ordered.

5. **AUDIENCE ITEMS**

None.

6. **CONSENT CALENDAR**

A. PLANNING APPLICATION NO. 21-02; APPLICANT: Peninsula Center; LOCATION: 44-B Peninsula Center. A request to approve a Precise Plan of Design application to amend the Peninsula shopping center master sign plan.

B. Quarterly Code Enforcement Report.

COMMISSIONER CONWAY moved, seconded by COMMISSIONER KILLEN

TO RECEIVE AND FILE ITEMS A AND B OF THE CONSENT CALENDAR.

There being no objection, CHAIRMAN ZERUNYAN so ordered.

Director Orci advised of the 20-day appeal period for item 6A.

7. **BUSINESS ITEMS**

A. PLANNING APPLICATION NO 17-02; APPLICANT: GOLD CROWN HALLMARK; LOCATION: 38 PENINSULA CENTER. A REQUEST TO APPROVE A PRECISE PLAN OF DESIGN APPLICATION (PA-30-00) TO ALLOW A LOGO ON A BUSINESS IDENTIFICATION SIGN FOR GOLD CROWN HALLMARK CENTER.

Assistant Planner Tran gave a staff report (as per written material) and recommended that the Planning Commission approve PA-17-02 with the condition that the logo only be used once.

CHAIRMAN ZERUNYAN requested a clarification on the number of times the logo must appear for the Gold Crown Hallmark and also asked if this was a franchise.

Director Orci indicated that this was a franchise business with certain rights to use the "Gold Crown" name.

Jack Fovell, a representative of the applicant, of the Southwest Sign Company, stated that the Hallmark Company has trademarked the two ribbons or one ribbon under the "Hallmark" copy. He indicated that the two ribbons must be used with the signage. Research found that the prior approval was not legal.

CHAIRMAN ZERUNYAN asked Mr. Fovell why they are not using the Hallmark name and one banner underneath the name.

Mr. Fovell responded that the master sign plan disallows two lines of copy but that the applicant has no objection to having two lines of copy. He further stated that they have a 60-foot wide storefront and the sign, as designed, conforms to the maximum length allowed for the sign. He further stated that the master sign plan regulates the size of the logo but does not limit the number of logos. Therefore, the sign, as presented, is in conformity with the master sign plan for this center. He further stated that in order for a store to qualify for the elite "Gold Crown" designation, they have the best operation, product mix, and best store layout and that if they are not allowed to use the trademark, then they are not permitted to use the "Gold Crown" designation.

CHAIRMAN ZERUNYAN asked Director Orci to clarify the regulations.

Director Orci stated that the Commission had a couple of regulations that need to be reviewed. The first is the Logo Design Guidelines that indicate one logo per sign with a scale similar to the sign. The other regulation is the master sign plan, which requires Planning Commission review of the logo. The regulation in the master sign plan limits signs along that storefront to a single line, and a sign with two lines would be contrary to the master sign plan. Director Orci added that this particular tenant has a larger than usual storefront.

Discussion ensued between the Commission and Director Orci regarding the Master Sign Plan. The primary concern was to have the applicant retain his "Gold Crown" status and comply with the trademark regulations.

COMMISSIONER CONWAY moved, and seconded by COMMISSIONER SOMERS

TO APPROVE PA-17-02 CONSISTENT WITH THE FOLLOWING FINDINGS: 1) THAT THE TENANT HAS A LARGER THAN TYPICAL STOREFRONT THAT CAN ACCOMMODATE THE PROPOSED SIGN; 2) THAT THE SINGLE LINE OF LOGOS IS DESIRABLE OVER THE USE OF TWO LINES; 3) THAT THE POTENTIAL LOSS OF THE "GOLD CROWN" IS NOT DESIRED BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION; AND 4) THIS DETERMINATION IS NOT MEANT TO REFLECT AN ATTEMPT TO ADVERTISE WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE LOGO.

There being no objection, CHAIRMAN ZERUNYAN so ordered.

Director Orci stated there is a 20-day appeal period.

B. PLANNING APPLICATION 20-02; APPLICANT MR. & MRS. DAVID WENDORFF; LOCATION: 1 PONDEROSA LANE. REQUEST TO APPROVE A NEIGHBORHOOD COMPATIBILITY DETERMINATION TO DEMOLISH A HOME AND CONSTRUCT A NEW TWO-STORY HOME; AND A MINOR DEVIATION APPLICATION IS REQUIRED FOR ADDITIONS IN THE FRONT YARD WHICH ENCROACH AND DECREASE THE FRONT YARD AREA BY LESS THAN 10%.

Assistant Planner Wong gave a staff report (as per written material) and recommended the Planning Commission continue PA-20-02 to allow the applicant sufficient time to address the Neighborhood Compatibility Determination items identified in this report.

In response to a question from COMMISSIONER KILLEN, Assistant Planner Wong stated that some of the homes in the photo package were built prior to the Neighborhood Compatibility ordinance.

COMMISSIONER CONWAY asked about the home encroaching into the 12-foot easement and if the City would typically get an indemnity before permitting the improvements.

Director Orci stated that if approved, staff would include a condition that would require the applicant to indemnify the City and seek permission to build from the appropriate easement holder.

In response to a question from CHAIRMAN ZERUNYAN, Director Orci said that all of the residents of Ponderosa Lane signed the petition letter.

COMMISSIONER CONWAY asked Director Orci about the non-standard designs and their incorporation into the Neighborhood Compatibility Ordinance.

Director Orci responded that the City encourages the "California Ranch" architectural style. He further discussed the ordinance and its history.

COMMISSIONER KILLEN stated that over time, buildings would migrate back to the consistency of the community.

CHAIRMAN ZERUNYAN stated that the term "community" could be an entire city as opposed to defining it as areas within the city. What is the definition of "community"? What is the intent of community uniformity?

COMMISSIONER SOMERS also expressed his concern of the definition of "community".

The applicant's architect, Brad Dudley, presented a scale model to the Planning Commission for review and discussed some of the home's details.

The applicant, David Wendorff, stated the storm drain is part of the Los Angeles County Flood Control.

COMMISSIONER CONWAY stated that staff has worked with the applicant to attempt to change the architectural style to be consistent with the neighborhood compatibility. He asked the applicant to further discuss this issue.

Mr. Wendorff stated that the code and the guidelines direct applicants to review the neighborhood for "direction" in terms of compatibility. He stated there are a variety of versions of "California Ranch Style".

CHAIRMAN ZERUNYAN stated it is clearly a revival of a Spanish design home and was not compatible with the homes on the street.

Mr. Wendorff responded that he felt it was compatible with the homes on the street and was comprised of some of the major elements of the "California Ranch Style" design.

Mr. Jim Miller, 10 Ponderosa Lane, stated he was very happy with the design. He indicated that there is a little bit of everything on the street, such as 9 Ponderosa Lane, which was a Tudor, German/Swiss Chalet design, which was approved about two years ago. He added that 5 Ponderosa Lane had a "garage" look and was remodeled within the last five years. He added that the different neighborhoods such as Latigo Lane and Hidden Valley have various versions of the "Ranch" look. Some have Spanish, and others have French and Tudor styles.

Mr. Harry & Valerie Donohue, 2 Ponderosa Lane, stated that they had a chance to review the plans and endorsed the project.

COMMISSIONER SOMERS expressed concern that the neighborhood would start changing with the development and approval of this home.

CHAIRMAN ZERUNYAN stated that any style or design could open the flood gates to allow any style.

Mr. Donohue responded that the applicant's style is the one that he endorses and that any other styles in the future would need to be reviewed on an individual basis.

Mr. Wendorff stated that he is a developer and one of his concerns was presenting a design that is compatible with the neighborhood. He stated he looked at some ranch homes in Tuscany, Italy and that this was a ranch home in a European setting. He stated that he would appreciate approval of this project as planned.

In response to a question from COMMISSIONER CONWAY, Mr. Wendorff stated he had lived in the home with his family for six years.

COMMISSIONER CONWAY told the applicant he was pleased with the home design and if there was a preponderance of neighbors approving it, that he would be in support of the project as designed.

COMMISSIONER SOMERS stated this was a very difficult case to review because they try to sustain "Ranch Style" architecture in various communities and this home is not compatible with the homes in the community. He added that Mr. Wendorff has done an excellent job in the articulation of the design and he has added various items that try to make it compatible. He suggested that they should probably approve the applicant's plans.

COMMISSIONER KILLEN discussed with staff how the ordinance started. He stated that the City should send out literature to the community about the "Ranch Style". He further discussed several options for changes toward "Ranch Style, that he could support. He discussed some options and specified changes that would bring the design more in line with the "Ranch Style". He asked the applicant if this was a possibility.

Mr. Wendorff stated that he would like to hear the balance of the comments of the Commission and that he would be willing to make some of the recommended changes as discussed, if he could get approval tonight.

COMMISSIONER REIN agreed the house is a very attractive design, although the neighborhood compatibility issue is clear and the house is more different than similar to the neighborhood homes. He stated that the home looks like an Italian villa and would be more at home in Malaga Cove.

COMMISSIONER KILLEN further discussed some suggested options with Mr. Wendorff.

Director Orci stated that this matter could be brought back to the Planning Commission if the applicant is willing to explore the issue.

CHAIRMAN ZERUNYAN commented on his concern is that communities try very hard to pass neighborhood compatibility ordinances. He stated their job is to preserve and protect the ordinance. It is the Commission's intent to assist this project to try to fit within the guidelines of our neighborhood compatibility ordinance. The primary issue is "What is a neighborhood?" The concern is what about the next home, and the next and the next that does not preserve the neighborhood. He stated he would prefer to "err on the side of our neighborhood compatibility ordinance". He stated to Mr. Wendorff that he hoped he would work with the Commission and staff to comply.

Mr. Wendorff stated that he would work with staff to comply. They have some constraints that are currently impacting their project. He stated he would appreciate approval based on the changes needed.

CHAIRMAN ZERUNYAN responded that they could not approve that request, but that he is positive that staff would work diligently with him.

COMMISSIONER CONWAY stated that in response to CHAIRMAN ZERUNYAN'S concern of the "next, and the next," that the next Planning Commission will look at the next project that comes forward and if every Planning Commission maintained the high design guideline threshold that they would not be seeing less quality projects. He stated that he had no fear that the next project good looking would be automatically approved. In response to the discussion of the intent of the neighborhood compatibility ordinance was to establish character of all residential neighborhoods in the city, that section of the ordinance goes on to indicate all existing residential neighborhoods do have an existing character. This project is reflective of that neighborhood, particularly if every neighbor said they like it. He indicated that he would like to approve this application with the

condition of the specified changes to allow the applicant get started and get the project approved.

COMMISSIONER KILLEN stated that the project looked good and further discussed ultra modern buildings, which may also look good.

Director Orci stated that the applicant would need new plans by Monday, July 8th.

COMMISSIONER KILLEN moved, and seconded by COMMISSONER SOMERS

TO CONTINUE PA-20-02 TO THE NEXT MEETING OF JULY 15, 2002.

There being no objection, CHAIRMAN ZERUNYAN so ordered.

8. PUBLIC HEARINGS

None

9. COMMISSION ITEMS

None

10. DIRECTOR'S ITEMS

Director Orci discussed the number of Committees that are before the Commission. He asked for clarification of who had participated on which Committees.

CHAIRMAN ZERUNYAN appointed COMMISSIONERS BAYER AND VULLO to the ADA Committee.

11. MATTERS OF INFORMATION

A. City Council Actions (June 25, 2002)

COMMISSIONER CONWAY moved to

TO RECEIVE AND FILE ITEM 11 A.

There being no objection, CHAIRMAN ZERUNYAN so ordered.

12. ADJOURNMENT

At 9:15 p.m. CHAIRMAN ZERUNYAN adjourned the Planning Commission meeting to the meeting of July 15, 2002, at 7:30 p.m.

Judith Trujillo
Minutes Secretary

Douglas R. Prichard
City Clerk