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REGULAR PLANNING MINUTES

MAY 16, 2005

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ADJOURNMENT

MINUTES

REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

MAY 16, 2005

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 PRO TEM REIN.

2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

CHAIRMAN PRO TEM REIN led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

3. **ROLL CALL**

Commissioners Present: Southwell, Conway, Vanden Bos, Bayer, O'Day, Chairman Pro Tem Rein
Commissioners Absent: Chairman Killen
Staff Present: Planning Director Wahba, Assistant Planner Wong

4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

COMMISSIONER BAYER stated that she would like the minutes of the May 2, 2005 Planning Commission meeting to be amended to reflect her comments about the applicant at 4 Pleasant Hill Drive. The owner's father had mentioned that he owned the home on the corner of Hidden Valley and Pleasant Hill, which he had extensively renovated. Thus, he was aware of the City ordinances and that he was asking the Commission for something that the Commission was not able to do.

COMMISSIONER CONWAY moved, seconded by COMMISSIONER BAYER,

TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING OF MAY 2, 2005, AS AMENDED.

AYES: Southwell, Conway, Vanden Bos, Bayer, O'Day, Chairman Pro Tem Rein
NOES:
ABSTAIN:
ABSENT: Chairman Killen

5. **AUDIENCE ITEMS**

None.

6. **CONSENT CALENDAR**

COMMISSIONER CONWAY moved, seconded by COMMISSIONER BAYER,

TO APPROVE THE CONSENT CALENDAR.

AYES: Southwell, Conway, Vanden Bos, Bayer, O'Day, Chairman Pro Tem Rein
NOES:
ABSTAIN:
ABSENT: Chairman Killen

B. A RESOLUTION (PA-22-04) OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF ROLLING HILLS ESTATES APPROVING A NEIGHBORHOOD COMPATIBILITY FOR FIRST STORY ADDITIONS LOCATED AT THE FRONT, SIDES AND REAR OF AN EXISTING SINGLE STORY HOME; A MINOR

DEVIATION FOR A DECREASE IN THE FRONT YARD AREA OF LESS THAN 10%; VARIANCES TO PROJECT BEYOND THE FORWARDMOST BUILDING AND ENCROACH INTO THE FRONT YARD SETBACK; AND A GRADING APPLICATION FOR REAR YARD IMPROVEMENTS. APPLICANT: MR. & MRS. HAROLD YIN; LOCATION: 33 HARBOR SIGHT DRIVE.

Planning Director Wahba asked for a separate roll call on Item 6(B) because it is a resolution of the Planning Commission for a variance.

COMMISSIONER VANDEN BOS asked for clarification of the exhibit referred to in the resolution. The resolution has a note in the second to last paragraph on the first page that the project must be redesigned to reduce or eliminate the entry tower and number of dormer windows. Planning Director Wahba confirmed that the exhibit does reflect the new design, and that note will be removed from the resolution, as it should have been taken out.

COMMISSIONER CONWAY moved, seconded by COMMISSIONER BAYER,

TO APPROVE RESOLUTION PA-22-04.

AYES: Southwell, Conway, Vanden Bos, Bayer, O'Day, Chairman Pro Tem Rein
NOES:
ABSTAIN:
ABSENT: Chairman Killen

7. BUSINESS ITEMS

A. PLANNING APPLICATION NO. 22-05; APPLICANT: MORNING STAR CHURCH; LOCATION: 735 SILVER SPUR ROAD; A PRECISE PLAN OF DESIGN FOR TWO WALL SIGNS WITH LOGO.

Assistant Planner Wong gave a brief Staff Report (as per written material) and reported that Staff finds that the proposed logo and wall signs are compatible with other businesses in the Peninsula Shopping Center in terms of scale, design, style, size and color and recommended that the Planning Commission approve the Application.

A member of the audience advised that there was a group attending on behalf of the project if the Commission had any questions in order to expedite the matter.

COMMISSIONER CONWAY moved, and COMMISSIONER VANDEN BOS seconded,

TO APPROVE PA-22-05 AS PRESENTED BY THE APPLICANT.

AYES: Southwell, Conway, Vanden Bos, Bayer, O'Day, Chairman Pro Tem Rein
NOES:
ABSTAIN:
ABSENT: Chairman Killen

Planning Director Wahba explained the 20-day appeal period.

COMMISSIONER VANDEN BOS expressed his appreciation of the packet made with the large picture for easy understanding of what the sign is. It was a very helpful, clear and illustrative drawing.

B. PLANNING APPLICATION NO. 23-05; APPLICANT: MR. ESSAM TAYMOUR; LOCATION: 47 BUCKSKIN LANE; A GRADING APPLICATION FOR GRADING AND CONSTRUCTION OF A RETAINING WALL IN THE REAR YARD.

Assistant Planner Wong gave a brief Staff Report (as per written material) and reported that Staff finds that the grading activity will not result in long-term impacts to the surrounding properties and will create a natural sloping rear yard to preserve the hillside appearance of the property and recommended that the Planning Commission approve the Application.

COMMISSIONER BAYER asked Staff where the fill goes that gets removed from the site and not reused. Planning Director Wahba explained that the basement portion is part of the building permit, and the portion that's excavated out leaves the site. Anything

left on the property is then treated as fill, which triggers the permit, and the portion excavated out will probably go to Chandler's, which is typically where it goes.

COMMISSIONER CONWAY asked Staff whether there is a streambed on the property. Planning Director Wahba replied that there is no streambed, and those notes are just standard notes. COMMISSIONER CONWAY then asked about a shed encroaching into a pipeline easement. The standard notes also say that title issues are independent of this grading plan.

CHAIRMAN PRO TEM REIN asked Staff if the Commission had seen this Application before for the basement construction of the property. Planning Director Wahba replied that it was an administrative approval because it's below the existing level of the house, so it's not considered a second story addition.

CHAIRMAN PRO TEM REIN pointed out that 350 cubic yards seemed like a lot of excavation and asked Staff whether the location of the retaining wall was proposed by the architect or if there was an effort by the Staff to try to decrease the export of fill. Planning Director Wahba replied that the Applicant wanted to make a more usable rear yard by creating two small, flatter pads based on the topography to the rear of the home.

CHAIRMAN VANDEN BOS asked Staff whether the basement added square feet. Planning Director Wahba confirmed that it is adding square feet. It's a big crawl space that can be walked into. They're carving part of that out, and where it daylights, taking some more dirt out beyond the footprint. CHAIRMAN VANDEN BOS raised the issue of confusion whether basements are counted as square footage of the house or not. Planning Director Wahba explained that if it complies with the egress requirements, and it's finished off on the interior with insulation, 5/8 drywall, electrical outlets every so many feet, all-weather doors, etc., then it's counted as square footage. The egress is the big trigger with basements. If it doesn't have egress, then you could finish it off, but it would not be rated as habitable space, and then it's not counted as square footage.

COMMISSIONER BAYER moved, and COMMISSIONER VANDEN BOS seconded,

TO APPROVE PA-23-05 AS PRESENTED BY THE APPLICANT.

AYES: Southwell, Conway, Vanden Bos, Bayer, O'Day, Chairman Pro Tem Rein
NOES:
ABSTAIN:
ABSENT: Chairman Killen

Planning Director Wahba explained the 20-day appeal period.

C. PLANNING APPLICATION NO. 21-05; APPLICANT: MR. TODD MORRIS;
LOCATION: 47 RANCHVIEW ROAD; A NEIGHBORHOOD COMPATIBILITY
FOR ADDITIONS AT THE FRONT, SIDE AND REAR OF THE HOUSE. A
MINOR DEVIATION IS REQUIRED TO DECREASE THE FRONT YARD AREA
BY LESS THAN 10% AND INCREASE LOT COVERAGE BY NOT MORE THAN
10%.

Assistant Planner Wong gave a brief Staff Report (as per written material) and reported that Staff is not able to support the Neighborhood Compatibility Determination, lot coverage and Minor Deviations and recommended that the Planning Commission continue PA-21-05 or deny the Application.

COMMISSIONER VANDEN BOS asked Staff for clarification of the height and whether there is a regulation about how high a first story can go and still be conforming. Planning Director Wahba replied that it is subject to Neighborhood Compatibility, and chimneys are typically 2 feet higher. Chimneys are exempted now from the 27-foot height limit as a City Council Policy Determination. Part of it is the large span of the house and the roof design. Lowering the pitch or reworking the roof plan to break up the massing is advised. A single-story home, raised foundation, with a 9-foot plate height typically doesn't exceed 16 feet, and a two-story home is generally at about 25 feet.

COMMISSIONER BAYER commented that she couldn't tell what was going on with the way it was flagged; the flags were falling apart and falling down. Also, the first house on the left driving up the street stands out as not being compatible with the rest of the houses, and then all other houses are compatible and fit in as you keep driving up. This project might have that same kind of effect.

Todd Morris (22829 Hawthorne Boulevard, Torrance), Applicant, addressed the Commission and asked what he needed to do to get it approved, explaining that he has money sunk into it and wants to get it approved.

COMMISSIONER CONWAY asked Mr. Morris if Staff provided suggestions. Mr. Morris stated that Staff advised that the slope is too high. Mr. Morris then asked the Commission what too high is, explaining that he is within 27 feet, and there's no height limitation on the first floor. COMMISSIONER CONWAY pointed out that the height is subject to Neighborhood Compatibility.

Mr. Morris further stated that he is trying to build something that will improve the neighborhood and increase the values and is also trying to meet the code. Mr. Morris asked the Commission for input so that he could get approval and start the project. COMMISSIONER CONWAY advised Mr. Morris him that the typical approach to a single-story home is to have a 16-foot high ridge height, which was not complied with, so the proposal project is not necessarily consistent with the neighborhood.

Mr. Morris stated that there was another issue with the patio in the front—the lot coverage and asked if those issues and the roof sloping issues are addressed whether he then comes back and meets with Staff and repeats the process. COMMISSIONER CONWAY confirmed that Mr. Morris identified the three issues at play, and he would have to come back to the Committee under Neighborhood Compatibility and further advised him that if he returned with Staff's recommendation, he'd likely have the Commission's support.

COMMISSIONER VANDEN BOS agreed, stating that the Commission does not often disagree with Staff, and when Staff doesn't recommend a project, there are reasons for it. The reasons have been identified here, and Mr. Morris needs to continue to work with Staff on them so that Staff views it as compatible, which the Commission will most likely then agree with. COMMISSIONER CONWAY further stated that he didn't see a compelling reason to exceed the lot coverage.

Mr. Morris then stated that he would make sure it is 30% lot coverage or less and asked for clarification of whether the 30% or 31% percent is covering the house plus the garage. COMMISSIONER VANDEN BOS clarified that the 30% rule is the house, garage, anything other than a walkway less than 4 feet, and the driveway. COMMISSIONER CONWAY then pointed out that maybe the earlier discussion about a basement that wasn't counted was what was confusing.

CHAIRMAN PRO TEM REIN asked Mr. Morris if he had not seen the report before, and Mr. Morris answered that he just got it today and was reading it over.

COMMISSIONER CONWAY moved, and COMMISSIONER VANDEN BOS seconded,

TO CONTINUE PA-21-05 TO ALLOW FOR MORE COORDINATION WITH THE PLANNING STAFF.

AYES: Southwell, Conway, Vanden Bos, Bayer, O'Day, Chairman Pro Tem Rein

NOES:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT: Chairman Killen

8. PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.

9. COMMISSION ITEMS

COMMISSIONER CONWAY addressed the lease extension at 2518 Palos Verdes Drive North in the Parks and Activities Commission minutes and suggested to Planning and perhaps the City Attorney to include waiver of relocation language in any lease of City-owned property so that if the City requires the termination of the lease or a month-to-month tenancy, the City is not exposed to relocation.

Planning Director Wahba stated that the lease is due to expire in August of this year. COMMISSIONER CONWAY pointed out that an expiring lease is more complicated as to whether relocation benefits are allowed or required, but on a month-to-month tenancy,

they're definitely required; and he again recommended that the lessee waive any relocation benefits as part of the lease requirement if it's renewed.

10. DIRECTOR'S ITEMS

None.

11. MATTERS OF INFORMATION

A. PARK AND ACTIVITIES COMMISSION MINUTES (MAY 3, 2005).

B. CITY COUNCIL ACTIONS (MAY 10, 2005).

COMMISSIONER CONWAY moved, and COMMISSIONER VANDEN BOS seconded,

TO RECEIVE AND FILE ITEMS 11A AND 11B.

There being no objection, CHAIRMAN PRO TEM REIN so ordered.

12. ADJOURNMENT

At 8:00 p.m. CHAIRMAN PRO TEM REIN adjourned the Planning Commission meeting to May 30, 2005, at 7:30 p.m.

Julie Cremeans
Minutes Secretary

Douglas R. Prichard
City Clerk