



**CITY OF SOUTH PASADENA
Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, April 11, 2023, 6:30 PM
Amedee O. "Dick" Richards Jr. Council Chambers
1424 Mission Street, South Pasadena, CA 91030**

CALL TO ORDER:

A meeting of the South Pasadena Planning Commission was called to order by Vice-Chair Dahl on Tuesday, April 11, 2023 at 6:32 p.m. The meeting was held at the Council Chambers located at 1424 Mission Street, South Pasadena, California.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Vice-Chair: Laura Dahl
Commissioners: Arnold Swanborn, Amitabh Barthakur and Lisa Padilla

Absent: Chair: John Lesak

**Council
Liaison:** Mayor: John Primuth

City Staff

Present: Domenica Megerdichian, Deputy City Manager
Ephraim Margolin, Deputy City Attorney
Alison Becker, Deputy Community Development Director
Matt Chang, Planning Manager
Braulio Madrid, Associate Planner

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Approved, 4-0.

DISCLOSURE OF SITE VISITS AND EX-PARTE CONTACTS:

Commissioner Padilla and Vice-Chair Dahl visited the site listed under Item 7, 335 Monterey Road.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

1. Public Comment – General (Non-Agenda Items):

None.

CONSENT CALENDER ITEMS:

2. Minutes from the Regular Meeting of May 10, 2022:

Approved.

3. Minutes from the Regular Meeting of June 14, 2022:

Continued, pending a quorum of Commissioners who attended the meeting.

4. Minutes from the Regular Meeting of July 12, 2022:

Continued. Revisions requested to page 5, fourth paragraph, regarding a height limits reference.

Deputy City Attorney Margolin advised the Commissioners that they are allowed to approve the minutes for meetings they did not attend. It is simply an approval of what was done.

BUSINESS ITEM:

5. Planning Commission Reorganization:

Recommendation:

Select Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary.

Staff Presentation:

Planning Manager Chang announced that it was time for the Planning Commission to select a new Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary, and provided background and terms for each position.

Decision:

Commissioner Padilla nominated Vice-Chair Dahl to serve as Chair, seconded by Commissioner Barthakur. Vice-Chair Dahl accepted the nomination.

Vice-Chair Dahl called the Roll:

Commissioner Padilla	Aye
Commissioner Barthakur	Aye
Commissioner Swanborn	Aye
Vice-Chair Dahl	Aye

Motion carried, 4-0.

Decision:

Commissioner Barthakur nominated Commissioner Padilla to serve as Vice-Chair, seconded by Commissioner Swanborn. Commissioner Padilla accepted the nomination.

Vice-Chair Dahl called the Roll:

Commissioner Barthakur	Aye
Commissioner Swanborn	Aye
Commissioner Padilla	Aye
Chair Dahl	Aye

Motion carried, 4-0.

Decision:

Commissioner Barthakur agreed to continue as Secretary.

Chair Dahl called the Roll:

Commissioner Swanborn	Aye
Vice-Chair Padilla	Aye
Commissioner Barthakur	Aye
Chair Dahl	Aye

Motion carried, 4-0.

PRESENTATION:

6. Updates from the City Manager's Office:

Deputy City Manager Megerdichian provided updates from last year into this year across the agency.

PUBLIC HEARING:

7. 335 Monterey Road - Tentative Parcel Map No. 2516-TPM:

A request for a Tentative Parcel Map to subdivide two (2) existing lots into three (3) lots located at 335 Monterey Road (APNs: 5311-012-040 & 5311-012-041). The subject properties are zoned Residential Estate (RE).

In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the proposed subdivision is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines § 15061(b)(3), which states the commonsense

exemption that CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment.

Recommendation:

Recommend that the Planning Commission adopt a Resolution taking the following actions:

1. Find the project exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines § 15061(b)(3), which states the commonsense exemption that CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA.
2. Approve Project No. 2516-TPM, subject to the recommended Conditions of Approval.

Staff Presentation:

Associate Planner Madrid presented a PowerPoint presentation.

Questions for Staff:

Commissioner Barthakur asked if this is one of the opportunity sites for the Housing Element. Planning Manager Chang concurred and provided more additional information.

Vice-Chair Padilla and Associate Planner Madrid discussed the slope of the site and the shared access easement.

Vice-Chair Padilla also asked if the access road and its historic walls were included in the Mills Act contract. Associate Planner Madrid explained that the Mills Act contract is only for the primary dwelling unit, which is used as an inn.

Commissioner Swanborn expressed concern for the condition of the road given the easement will provide access for the next property and there is no planned improvement for it.

Chair Dahl asked if the project anticipates any additional driveways. Associate Planner Madrid stated that no additional modifications of the site, land or structures are proposed as part of this project.

Chair Dahl expressed concern about creating a new vacant lot without assurances that something will be developed on that lot and requiring some landscaping or improvements while it remains vacant.

Applicant's Presentation:

None. However, the Applicant was available to answer any questions.

Questions for Applicant:

None.

Public Comments:

None.

Discussion:

Commissioner Swanborn discussed the subdivision of the lot, remarking that its maintenance should remain with the Applicant.

Commissioner Barthakur expressed concern whether the seven (7) units projected for this site at some future time would be further constrained because of the new configuration or would be unimpacted.

Vice-Chair Padilla thought the project exciting in terms of creating new opportunities and would be supportive of the lot split.

Chair Dahl asked if the layout of the three (3) lots, in addition to meeting the current zoning requirements, were laid out to best facilitate the future housing project. Planning Manager Chang explained that it is one of the sites identified to be up-zoned. It is currently zoned for residential status but will be rezoned to a higher density.

Decision:

Commissioner Swanborn motioned, seconded by Vice-Chair Padilla, to approve the lot split on 335 Monterey Road into three (3) parcels. Parcel 1 being 22,606 square feet; parcel 2, 13,207 square feet and the third parcel 40,986 square feet; with the third parcel to be maintained for its duration while it is vacant by the current Applicant. This project is exempt from CEQA as it is residential and less than ten (10) units and will not have a significant public impact.

Chair Dahl called the Roll:

Commissioner Swanborn	Aye
Commissioner Barthakur	Aye
Vice-Chair Padilla	Aye
Chair Dahl	Aye

Motion carried, 4-0.

8. Draft Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP):

To review a Draft Plan that identifies natural hazards and risks that can impact the community based on historical experience, estimates the potential frequency and magnitude of disasters, and assesses potential losses to life and property. The risk

assessment process provides a factual basis for the activities proposed in the mitigation strategy. The mitigation strategy identifies risks, and available capabilities. Communities develop mitigation goals and objectives as part of a strategy for mitigating hazard-related losses. Mitigation planning includes input from local stakeholders and the public, where appropriate.

The item is exempt from California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, through the use of the “General Rule” § 15061(b)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines as adoption of the Draft will have no potential adverse impact upon the environment because the LHMP will act as a guidebook for hazard mitigation strategies but does not implement any specific project, action, or funding.

Recommendation:

Recommend that the Planning Commission adopt a Resolution taking the following actions:

1. Find the project exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines through the use of the “General Rule” § 15061(b)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines as adoption of the Draft will have no potential adverse impact upon the environment because the LHMP will act as a guidebook for hazard mitigation strategies but does not implement any specific project, action or funding.
2. Review and approve the Draft 2023 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP).

Staff Presentation:

Fire Department Operation Division Chief Eric Zanteson introduced Consultant Russ Patterson to present a PowerPoint presentation.

Questions for Staff:

Commissioner Barthakur asked what the Federal government and State agencies are looking for with this plan and if we are competitive in getting any grant funding for mitigation that may have been identified as a priority but not yet funded. Chief Zanteson explained that for any opportunity that comes up for notice of intent from Cal OES or FEMA, they work with Management Services Department and their grant staff, and pursue them to the best of their ability.

Vice-Chair Padilla expressed concern about some of the surprisingly low estimated values that did not reflect the current replacement value. The Consultant remarked that the data was taken from the insurance valuation of the City provided through the risk management staff, Human Resources and Management Services. He will check with risk management to ensure that the numbers are accurate and reflect current values.

She also spoke about special notices for residents and property owners on brush clearance.

Commissioner Swanborn appreciated the very thorough report. He inquired about climate change with regard to the City's infrastructure. The Consultant said in every category there is a paragraph on climate change.

Chair Dahl requested clarification of comparative data reflecting information regarding earthquakes, wildfires, or drought.

In addition, Chair Dahl wanted to confirm the Commission's role. Planning Manager Chang explained the process.

Public Comment:

None.

Discussion:

Commissioner Barthakur remarked on Vice-Chair Padilla's observation about the replacement costs as presented in the report.

Decision:

Vice-Chair Padilla moved, seconded by Commissioner Barthakur, that the Planning Commission approve the Draft Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) for the City and to progress it to the City Council for approval and the other stages it needs to have at the State and Federal level, finding the project exempt under California Environmental Quality Guidelines (CEQA) through the use of the "General Rule" Section 1506(1)(b)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, as adoption of the Draft will have no potential adverse impact on the environment because the LHMP will act as a guidebook for hazard mitigation strategies, but does not implement any specific project, action, or funding. This will include approval of a Resolution of the Planning Commission adopting a Draft update of the LHMP.

Chair Dahl called the Roll:

Commissioner Swanborn	Aye
Commissioner Barthakur	Aye
Vice-Chair Padilla	Aye
Chair Dahl	Aye

Motion carried, 4-0.

ADMINISTRATION:

9. Comments from Council Liaison:

Mayor Primuth spoke about vegetation mitigation matters and expounded upon the City's procedures.

In addition, he announced that he and Councilmember Braun would be attending the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) General Assembly on May 4 and 5. SCAG is the Agency that implements the Housing Element and propounds the formula by which the City receives its Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) numbers.

10. Comments from Planning Commissioners:

Vice-Chair Padilla congratulated Chair Dahl on her new role as Chair of the Commission.

11. Comments from Staff:

Deputy Director Becker remarked that the Deputy City Manager had provided an excellent overview of the work of the Community Department. She also reported that the Department is actively recruiting for a Senior Planner position.

ADJOURNMENT:

12. Adjournment to the Special Joint Planning Commission meeting with City Council scheduled on April 29, 2023 at 9:00 am at the War Memorial Building:

There being no further matters, Chair Dahl adjourned the meeting at 7:57 pm.



Laura Dahl, Chair