

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
CITY OF SOUTH PASADENA PLANNING COMMISSION  
MEETING CONVENED THIS 25<sup>th</sup> DAY OF AUGUST 2014, 6:30 P.M.  
AT THE AMEDEE O. DICK RICHARDS, JR.  
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 1424 MISSION STREET**

<p><b>ROLL CALL</b></p>		<p><b>Meeting convened at:</b> 6:30 p.m.</p> <p><b>Commissioners Present:</b> Anthony George, Chair Kristin Morrish, Vice-Chair Steven Friedman Steven Dahl</p> <p><b>Council Liaison:</b> Robert S. Joe</p> <p><b>Staff Present:</b> Holly O. Whatley, Assistant City Attorney John Mayer, Senior Planner Knarik Vizcarra, Assistant Planner</p> <p><b>Absent:</b> David G. Watkins, Director of Planning and Building Evan Davis, Commissioner</p> <p>Comm. Dahl led the pledge of allegiance.</p>
<p><b>PUBLIC COMMENTS</b></p>		<p>None</p>
<p><b>CONTINUED HEARINGS</b></p>	<p>1</p>	<p><b>291 St. Albans Avenue (Hillside Development Permit/Design Review – Single Family Addition)</b></p> <p>Senior Planner, John Mayer presented his staff report, regarding approval for a Hillside Development Permit and Design Review for a single family addition. Mr. Mayer noted that this item was continued from the July 28, 2014 Planning Commission meeting, due to plan inconsistencies and missing information. The applicant provided missing information and addressed some of the inconsistencies. At the conclusion of Mr. Mayer’s presentation, the Commission did not have questions for him.</p> <p>Chair George declared the public hearing open. The applicant Christian Poloni from Poloni Design introduced himself, presented a color board and revised renderings to the Commission. Mr. Poloni noted the following changes made to the project: 1) a balcony replaced the spiral staircase towards the back of the project; 2) the front and side windows were revised to match the existing style of the house; and 3) an enlarged stair plan for the front addition was included in the staff report [the stair plan displayed third level access].</p> <p>Comm. Dahl inquired as to the placement of stucco in relationship to the</p>

windows. Mr. Poloni noted that the windows are recessed and there is no trim; therefore, the stucco will go up to the windows.

Seeing that there were no speakers in favor of or in opposition to this item, Chair George declared the public hearing closed.

The Commission continued discussion on this item and noted the following inconsistencies, regarding the plans: 1) exterior window details - new window details should match the existing window details; 2) exterior elevations - window height on the exterior elevation is not reflected properly; 3) stucco finishing- how will the new stucco match the existing stucco in relationship to the door and window frames; and 4) conflicting window height – the existing windows are designated as 4' in height and the new windows are designated at 5' in height [the new and existing window heights should match].

Chair George reopened the public hearing to see if the applicant was in agreement with making changes to the plans, regarding the aforementioned inconsistencies, and if he was amenable with changing the window detail to match the existing window/door details [excluding the brick molding], in addition to a window height change from 5' to 4'.

The applicant noted the following: 1) the existing windows are 5' tall on the second level of the proposed South elevation; therefore, the proposed 5' tall windows will match the existing windows; 2) the proposed stucco will match the existing stucco; and 3) the window finish will match the existing. Comm. Dahl reviewed additional plan inconsistencies with the applicant.

After considering the staff report and draft resolution, a motion was made by Comm. Dahl to approve the project as submitted by staff including the CEQA findings and the following conditions: 1) the window detail should be adjusted so that the proposed windows match the existing windows instead of a new window concept; 2) the proposed windows on the front and side elevations should be 4' in height instead of 5' in height; and 3) the stucco should match the existing stucco [feathered], which will be approved by a chair review at the counter, instead of returning to the Commission.

Comm. Friedman & Morrish noted that there were no conditions attached for the project, which was confirmed by staff. Mr. Mayer noted that this was a simple project; therefore, conditions were not needed.

Comm. Dahl's motion was seconded by Vice-Chair Morrish.

The motion carried 4-0. (Resolution 14-20)

<p><b>PUBLIC HEARINGS</b></p>	<p>2</p>	<p><b>Zoning Code Amendment – Initiate a Zoning Code Amendment; Hearing to Repeal Mobile Ads/Move to Street Chapter</b></p> <p>Mr. Mayer presented his staff report, regarding approval for a resolution to initiate a Zoning Code Amendment, which is in response to City Council concerns and resident complaints, regarding mobile advertising vehicles. The proposed ordinance will prohibit the vehicles from parking within the city and repeal paragraph M, which lists prohibited signs within the city. At the conclusion of his staff report, Mr. Mayer presented the Commission with the existing ordinance language, which was proposed to be deleted as stated in the staff report. Mr. Mayer also referenced a list of prohibited signs for the city of South Pasadena.</p> <p>For clarity, Comm. Friedman verified with Mr. Mayer that the proposed ordinance will affect movable billboards [attached or unattached to a vehicle] only. Since the current ordinance is outdated, Mr. Mayer noted that changes needed to be made to it. Comm. Friedman also inquired as to signage painted onto a vehicle.</p> <p>Holly O. Whatley noted that there is a distinction between advertisements placed directly on a vehicle and signage that is towed behind a vehicle. The ordinance focuses on signage that is towed or left behind a vehicle.</p> <p>After considering the staff report and draft resolution, a motion was made by Vice-Chair Morrish, seconded by Comm. Friedman to adopt the resolution to initiate Zoning Code Amendment 0049.</p> <p>Chair George declared the public hearing open. Seeing that there were no speakers in favor of or in opposition to this item, Chair George declared the public hearing closed.</p> <p>Comm. Friedman made a motion to adopt the resolution, seconded by Vice-Chair Morrish, recommending that the City Council adopt the Zoning Code amendment and to amend to the Municipal Code as stated in the staff report.</p> <p>The motion carried 4-0. (Resolution 14-21).</p>
	<p>3</p>	<p><b>Recommendation to City Council – Synthetic Turf in Front Yards</b></p> <p>Debby Figoni, Senior Management Analyst gave a PowerPoint presentation regarding synthetic turf and posed the question, “Should synthetic turf be allowed in 30% of front parkways?” Ms. Figoni reviewed the history of this item and noted that parkways are located in the area between the street and the sidewalk, in the public right away. She also noted that the parkway is owned by the City but maintained by the resident. Ms. Figoni pointed out that the initial Parkway ordinance was adopted in 1983 but a new parkway</p>

ordinance was adopted by the Natural Resources and Environmental Commission [NREC] in July 2013.

In her PowerPoint presentation, Ms. Figoni noted the following 6 topics were approved by the City Council in the parkway ordinance except for Synthetic turf: 1) Maximum Plant Height - the parkway maximum plant height is 36"; 2) Drought Tolerant Plants - a list can be accessed at WUCOLS site, bewaterwise.com and from Ms. Figoni, our Management Analyst; 3) Access - plant height minimum is 18", walkway every 15' and 12" parallel to the curb; 4) Hardscape - Maximum hardscape is 30%; 5) Tree Species - a native and drought tolerant tree list was recently adopted by the City Council; 6) Synthetic Turf - 6a] Parkway/Front Landscape Connection - Homeowners usually match their front landscape to their parkway. Currently, synthetic turf is not allowed in the parkway. If it were allowed, it would occupy 30% of the parkway, 6b] Artificial turf allowed - a list with conditions was presented to the Commission, and 6c] synthetic turf issue - it conducts heat. A temperature chart was displayed and Ms. Figoni noted that synthetic turf can rise up to 152 degrees. At the conclusion of her presentation, Vice-Chair Morrish inquired, if the Commission was to discuss synthetic turf on the parkway "only" or on the parkway and the front landscape. Ms. Figoni posed another question, "If synthetic turf is allowed in parkways should it be allowed in front landscapes?" Synthetic turf in the front yard will conserve water. The down side to synthetic turf is that it needs to be watered, it gets very hot and it is not good for the soil or for the environment. Ms. Figoni noted that water wise plants are better for the environment than synthetic turf.

Chair George declared the public hearing open.

Kay Findley, and Al Benzoni, 1617 Monterey Road from the NREC spoke in support of this item and noted that the public should be given the option to use synthetic turf, in some instances, to turn blighted parkways into green parkways etc... The positive aspect is that synthetic turf is low maintenance and it looks great but it should be selected from an approved list by residents; otherwise, environmental leaching can occur from a poor quality of synthetic turf. It was also noted that synthetic turf is cooler than asphalt and that it cools off quickly.

Chair George declared the public hearing closed.

Chair George noted that a pre-approved list would be very helpful, as long as the list is amendable and supported with conditions. Comm. Dahl noted that the city should present large samples of synthetic turf for the community and allow them to view different samples synthetic turf. Chair Morrish noted that water wise plants should also be included in the list as another option for residents to choose from.

		<p>Comm. Friedman was not in agreement with the usage of synthetic turf. Regarding parkways, he noted that residents are the stewards of the City's property and "We are the city of trees and not the city of plastic". He noted that in lieu of synthetic turf, the combination of water wise plants, hardscape and patches of grass would work best and be best for the environment. Beneficial insects will be attracted to water wise plants, which is an attraction that artificial turf cannot provide; furthermore, artificial turf is not the solution for blighted parkways.</p> <p>Chair George was in agreement that synthetic turf is not a solution to blighted parkways, but it is an option that residents should have for the purpose of conserving water. He suggested revisiting this item within 6 months.</p> <p>After considering the staff report and draft resolution, a motion was made by Chair George, seconded by Comm. Dahl to approve this project as submitted by staff.</p> <p>Chair George noted that the Commission is not unanimously in favor of artificial turf and they are aware of the potential negative impacts, but for the purpose of conserving water, the selection of synthetic turf may override concerns, as long as there is a pre-approved list that is amendable.</p> <p>The motion carried 3-1. Comm. Friedman was the dissenting party.</p>
	4	<p><b>Minutes of the Planning Commission's July 28, 2014 meeting</b></p> <p>The minutes were approved submitted by staff with a small correction.</p>
	5	<p><b>Comments from City Council Liaison</b></p> <p>Council Liaison, Joe noted the following ordinances/2nd readings were approved by the City Council at the August 20, 2014 meeting: 1) the 2' setback requirement [rear and side yard] for detached garages/carports; and 2) construction vehicles exceeding 8' 3" in width and weigh more than 1600 lbs. on specific streets were restricted. A resolution declaring a stage one moderate water supply shortage and the implementation of water irrigation restrictions were adopted. Residents were also asked to reduce their water consumption by 10%.</p>
	6	<p><b>Comments from Planning Commissioners</b></p> <p>Comm. Dahl thanked John Mayer for filling in for David Watkins and welcomed the new Assistant City Attorney to the Planning Commission. Chair George also welcomed the new Assistant City Attorney to the Planning Commission. Chair George commended the City Council for returning the garage ordinance to the Planning Commission for review instead of making a judgment on the matter.</p>

		Vice-Chair Morrish informed the Commission that she will not be able to attend the Planning Commission meetings scheduled for the months of September and October.
	7	<b>Comments from Staff</b>  Mr. Mayer noted that the Unified School District will have an open house on Wednesday, 9/10/14, regarding their new mixed use project from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. in the board room. The developer, the environmental consultants and the school district officials will attend the meeting to answer any questions from the public.
<b>ADJOURN- MENT</b>	8	The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m. to the Planning Commission meeting scheduled for September 22, 2014.

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing minutes were adopted by the Planning Commission of the City of South Pasadena at a meeting held on October 27, 2014.

**AYES: DAHL, GEORGE & FRIEDMAN**

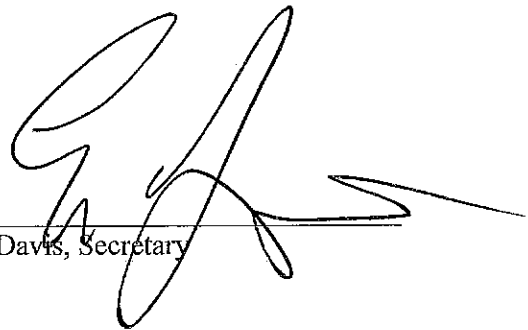
**NOES: NONE**

**ABSENT: MORRISH**

**ABSTAIN: DAVIS**



Anthony R. George, Chair



Evan Davis, Secretary

**ATTEST:**



Elaine Serrano, Recording Secretary