

**PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**May 2, 2013**

West Hollywood Park Public Meeting Room – Council Chambers  
625 N. San Vicente Boulevard, West Hollywood, California 90069

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Buckner called the meeting of the Planning Commission to order at 6:33 P.M.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Sybil Zaden led the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. **ROLL CALL:**  
Commissioners Present: Aghaei, Altschul, Huebner, Yeber, Vice-Chair DeLuccio, Chair Buckner.  
  
Commissioners Absent: None.  
  
Staff Present: Adrian Gallo, Associate Planner, Jennifer Alkire, Associate Planner, Christopher Corrao, Associate Planner, John Keho, Current and Historic Preservation Planning Manager, Stephanie DeWolfe, Community Development Director, Christi Hogin, Assistant City Attorney, and David Gillig, Commission Secretary.
4. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA.**  
**ACTION:** Approve the Planning Commission Agenda of Thursday, May 2, 2013 as presented. **Moved by Vice-Chair DeLuccio, seconded by Commissioner Huebner and unanimously carried.**
5. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES.**  
David Gillig, Commission Secretary, noted a correction on page 7 of 12 regarding the roll call vote. Commissioner Yeber's vote should be recorded as "Aye," making the roll call vote regarding the zone text amendment (Housing Element SB2), Resolution No. PC 12-1033, unanimous.  
  
**A. April 18, 2013**  
  
**ACTION:** Approve the Planning Commission Minutes of Thursday, April 18, 2013 as amended. **Moved by Commissioner Altschul, seconded by Commissioner Huebner and unanimously carried.**
6. **PUBLIC COMMENT.**  
EDWARD LEVIN, WEST HOLLYWOOD, had concerns and commented on the interpretation of the zoning code in relation to the tall wall project located at 8730 Sunset Boulevard, West Hollywood, California.  
  
STEPHANIE HARKER, WEST HOLLYWOOD, stated the State Historic Resources Commission voted unanimously to designate Great Hall/Long Hall in Plummer Park to the National Register of Historic Places.

GENEVIEVE MORRILL, LOS ANGELES, President, CEO, West Hollywood Chamber of Commerce, spoke in support of the tall wall project located at 8730 Sunset Boulevard, West Hollywood, California.

CATHY BLAIVAS, WEST HOLLYWOOD, stated the State Historic Resources Commission voted unanimously to designate Great Hall/Long Hall in Plummer Park to the National Register of Historic Places.

**7. DIRECTOR'S REPORT.**

Stephanie DeWolfe, Community Development Director provided an update of items related to the Planning Commission for the upcoming City Council meeting on Monday, May 6, 2013.

She stated an inter-active map notating all current and pending projects within the City of West Hollywood will be exhibited to City Council, which will then be put up on the City's webpage immediately following the meeting.

She identified the tentative date regarding the joint study session with the Planning Commission and City Council, regarding the Housing Element. The meeting date may be rescheduled to Monday, June 24, 2013. This will be decided at the next City Council meeting on Monday, May 6, 2013.

There will also be an update on the entertainment shuttle and an item regarding the force majeure delay to The Lot development agreement.

She confirmed the nomination for the National Register for Great Hall/Long Hall. She stated it was heard by the State Historic Resources Commission on Wednesday, May 1, 2013. Their recommendation goes forward to the State Historic Preservation Officer, who will review the nomination. If that person finds it meets all the criteria, they will then forward it to the Keeper of the National Register. Unless there is an appeal or other challenges, it will be listed on the National Register within a period of forty-five days.

She provided an update on the outreach program for the upcoming Bike and Pedestrian Plan, and confirmed the return of the Sunset Strip Night Market, from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. on Thursday evenings. She encouraged involvement.

**8. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS.**

Commissioner Yeber acknowledged staff on their work they have done pertaining to the Plummer Park Master Plan and the many years of public outreach and public meetings.

**9. CONSENT CALENDAR.**

**A. 8730 Sunset Boulevard:**

On Thursday, April 4, 2013, the Planning Commission directed staff to return with a resolution of approval to amend a conditional use permit to modify the placement of an existing 10,858 square-foot tall wall located on the building's west façade, without modifying the tall wall square-footage.

**ACTION:** 1) Adopt Resolution No. PC 13-1042 as presented: "A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD, APPROVING A MAJOR AMENDMENT TO A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT TO MODIFY THE PLACEMENT OF AN EXISTING 10,858 SQUARE-FOOT TALL WALL, LOCATED ON THE BUILDING'S WEST FAÇADE AT 8730 SUNSET BOULEVARD, WEST HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA." **Moved by Vice-Chair DeLuccio, seconded by Commissioner Huebner and carried; notating the abstentions of Commissioner Altschul and Chair Buckner, and Commissioner Yeber voting no.**

*Commissioner Altschul recused himself from this item; notating his residence is within the 500 foot radius of the project site.*

## 10. PUBLIC HEARINGS.

### A. 8741 St. Ives Drive:

John Keho, Planning Manager provided background information as presented in the staff report dated Thursday, May 2, 2013.

He stated the applicant is requesting to change the General Plan and zoning designation for the rear property (which is within the City of West Hollywood) from R4A (high density) to R1A (single-family residential). The owners are requesting the zoning change in order to build a large single family property.

**ACTION:** 1) Approve the application; 2) Adopt Resolution No. PC 13-1039 as presented: "A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD, RECOMMENDING TO THE CITY COUNCIL ADOPTION OF A GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT AND A ZONING MAP AMENDMENT TO CHANGE THE GENERAL PLAN AND ZONING DESIGNATION FOR THE REAR PORTION OF THE PROPERTY LOCATED WITHIN THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA, FROM "R4A" TO "R1A", FOR THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 8741 ST. IVES DRIVE, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA.:" and 3) Close Public Hearing Item 10.A. **Moved by Vice-Chair DeLuccio, seconded by Commissioner Aghaei and passes on a Roll Call Vote:**

**AYES:** Aghaei, Huebner, Yeber, Vice-Chair DeLuccio, Chair Buckner.  
**NOES:** None.  
**ABSENT:** None.  
**RECUSED:** Altschul.

*Commissioner Altschul returned to dais at this time.*

**B. 1211 N. Horn Avenue:**

Applicant is requesting to convert an existing four-story, sixteen-unit rental housing building into a fifteen-unit common interest (condominium) development.

**ACTION:** Continue to Thursday, June 6, 2013. **Moved by Vice-Chair DeLuccio, seconded by Commissioner Huebner and unanimously carried as part of the approved agenda.**

**C. 8730 Sunset Boulevard:**

Jennifer Alkire, Associate Planner provided an oral and visual presentation and background information as presented in the staff report dated Thursday, May 2, 2013.

She stated the applicant is requesting a variance to construct a rooftop wireless telecommunications facility, with ground-level support equipment on an existing multi-family building.

She provided a detailed history of the property and stated the cellular antennas would be located on three separate locations on the roof of the building. Two would be located along Crescent Heights Boulevard, one on the corner of Crescent Heights Boulevard and Fountain Avenue, and one farther east on Fountain Avenue. There would be an area of ground mounted support equipment located along Crescent Heights Boulevard; not within any side yard setbacks.

She reiterated Federal law prohibits the City of West Hollywood from denying a request for wireless facilities if there is a need for one in the area and the applicant has demonstrated the need for the facility at this particular site.

Staff worked with the applicant to make sure the addition of the antennas and pertinent screening would not result in as an eyesore to the neighborhood. The applicant was very receptive to staff's comments.

She detailed the elevations, screening, facades along Fountain Avenue and Crescent Heights Boulevard, landscaping, antenna locations, ground mounted equipment, and setbacks.

Staff supports the application.

Commissioner Aghaei questioned if cell sites have been approved in the past on residential multi-family buildings, and if there have been any complaints.

John Keho, Planning Manager stated the City of West Hollywood recently approved one about three years ago, and is not aware of any complaints since the approval.

Commissioner Yeber requested clarification of the location of the ground equipment, rooftop projections and screening heights. He questioned why the applicant is requesting three cell towers.

Commissioner Altschul requested clarification regarding the discretion of granting this request.

Chair Buckner opened the public hearing for Item 10.C.:

MARYANN HARWOOD, ORANGE, AT&T applicant's representative, presented the applicants report. She spoke and detailed the licensing requirements, wireless service upgrades and sectors, design materials, screening, landscaping, and cell height.

Commissioner Yeber requested clarification regarding the screens, screening materials, landscaping and elevations.

**ACTION:** Close public hearing for Item 10.C: **Motion carried by consensus of the Commission.**

Commissioner Yeber had concerns with the urban design. He stated he is not sure if the eleven foot screens are necessary. He stated this could be overkill. He questioned if the screen heights could be dropped and commented this really changes the dynamic of the building. If there is an inset panel, it needs to be substantial enough so that the shadow that it casts will be recognizable.

**Commissioner Yeber moved to: 1) approve the application with the condition of the possibility of reducing the massing of the screens to better blend into the building, and make sure the inset is substantial enough to make a difference.**

**Seconded by Commissioner Aghaei.**

Commissioner Altschul stated the conditions in the motion are too "tentative".

Commissioner Yeber clarified that the applicant shall work with staff, since there is no defined height according to the zoning code.

There was debate over the motion on the floor.

Christie Hogin, Assistant City Attorney clarified for the record the conditions have to be sufficiently specific, so that staff understands when in fact they have been complied with; so staff is not given unbridled discretion.

She suggested a revision to the conditions to read: “capping it at the current recommended eleven feet, but that requested staff consider whether or not something shorter of that, given the vegetation would completely cover it, with the goal that it’s approved, once they’ve established that it’s completely covered from public view, no higher than eleven feet.”

There was discussion on sight lines and height.

**Commissioner Yeber amended the motion: 1) there shall be a maximum height of nine feet (the screen and the antenna equipment at its maximum should be the same height, not taller), but, looking at a sight line from across the street, if it can be shorter.**

**Christie Hogin, Assistant City Attorney clarified the motion: 1) that it is nine feet, or, not visible from the site line from across the street, whichever is shorter.**

**Commissioner Yeber agreed to this clarification.**

Commissioner Altschul requested clarification of the “site location” across the street. He stated this is not specific enough.

John Keho, Planning Manager stated staff would interpret that to be directly across the street.

Commissioner Yeber agreed with staff.

Vice-Chair DeLuccio questioned staff if there is anything else they can do regarding the design.

Jennifer Alkire, Associate Planner stated staff has worked as much as they could have with the applicant. She clarified the height concerns, stating if it was brought down to nine feet, it would be two feet below the height of the antenna.

Discussion was held regarding the building’s levels, parapets, walls, draining system, and height issues.

**Commissioner Yeber amended the motion to read: 1) it shall not exceed the height of the antennas at its maximum, but see if the visual site line allows staff to bring that down a little further.**

**Jennifer Alkire, Associate Planner, added to the condition: 1) applicant shall work with the Urban Designer to establish a depth for the inset that would be meaningful.**

**Commissioner Yeber agreed to this clarification.**

Vice-Chair DeLuccio supports the motion. He stated he felt staff had worked with the applicant extensively already, in order to come to this solution. He originally had concerns with the landscaping, which had been previously addressed.

**ACTION:** 1) Approve the application; 2) Adopt Resolution No. PC 13-1040 as amended with the following conditions: *a) constructed walls shall not exceed the height of the antennas at its maximum, and be as low as possible but still not visible from reasonable site line across the street, as determined by the Director of Community Development; and b) the depth of the inset shall be subject to approval of the Urban Designer to assure that it is meaningful.* “A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD, APPROVING A MINOR CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT AND VARIANCE PERMIT FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A WIRELESS TELECOMMUNICATIONS FACILITY ON AN EXISTING MULTI-FAMILY BUILDING, LOCATED AT 1274 N. CRESCENT HEIGHTS BOULEVARD, WEST HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA.” and 3) Close Public Hearing Item 10.C. **Moved by Commissioner Yeber, seconded by Commissioner Aghaei and passes on a Roll Call Vote:**

**AYES:** Aghaei, Altschul, Huebner, Yeber, Vice-Chair DeLuccio, Chair Buckner.

**NOES:** None.

**ABSENT:** None.

**RECUSED:** None.

## 11. NEW BUSINESS.

### A. Avenues Streetscape Master Plan Update.

Christopher Corrao, Associate Planner provided an oral and visual presentation and background information on the Avenues Streetscape Master Plan.

He provided a detailed history of the original streetscape project, which involved sidewalks, crosswalks, and street trees. He stated they will be adding features such as improved crosswalks, and curb extensions.

He provided information on the public process and schedules.

Key Project Features Include:

- Sidewalk improvements project-wide;
- Roadway re-alignment for improved traffic flow;
- Bike lanes on Beverly Boulevard; and
- Public gathering spaces; and beautification project wide.

He stated they have not picked out specific species of trees, but rather characteristics that the group preferred, attractive, contemporary street lighting, street furniture throughout the project area, creative signage; pedestrian scaled and oriented for this district that is known for design, interpretive graphics wherever possible that tell the story of the area, and public art in all of the new street medians and gathering places.

He pointed out specific areas of interest and detailed street re-designs, managing the flow of traffic, widening of sidewalks, pedestrian gathering spaces, removing parking on select streets, adding bike lanes, pedestrian refuge crosswalks, and overhead lighting.

He detailed the upcoming schedule:

Transportation Commission, May 15, 2013;  
Consideration by City Council, June 3, 2013;  
Public Works Department initiates construction design drawings; upon adoption of plan; and  
Prioritize project phasing, coordinate with undergrounding of utility lines (portions of Melrose Avenue and Robertson Boulevard), and solicit grant funding.

Commissioner Yeber questioned the trees on Melrose Avenue and requested clarification on the bike lanes.

**12. UNFINISHED BUSINESS.** None.

**13. EXCLUDED CONSENT CALENDAR.** None.

**14. ITEMS FROM STAFF.**

**A. Planning Manager's Update.**

John Keho, Current and Historic Preservation Planning Manager provided an update of upcoming current and historic preservation commission projects and long range and mobility planning projects.

He stated the final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) has been released for the Domain Mixed-Use Project.

He confirmed staff recently approved a minor amendment to Movietown Plaza Mixed-Use Project. Changes to the approved plan include reducing the height of the buildings, reducing the square-footage of the units, change in the materials and design (due to the reduced scale of the building), and the revised plan includes increasing the sidewalk width by approximately two feet along Santa Monica Boulevard. Overall, the number of units in Movietown Plaza stays the same, the commercial square-footage stays the same and the location of the commercial spaces stays the same. They will be filing a tract map for the development. The agreements on the affordable housing stays the same and all other elements of the development agreement remain the same.

On Thursday, May 16, 2013, the City will be hosting a large style block party bike hub on Santa Monica Boulevard (east of Hancock Avenue) to celebrate Bike to Work Day. The Bike Hub is sponsored by the West Hollywood Bicycle Coalition, Bikes and Kikes, Los Angeles Bicycle Coalition, Coffee Bean and Tea Leaf, Trader Joes, AIDS LifeCycle, and I. Martin Bicycles. Bicyclists will be able to stop by the hub for snacks, coffee and a raffle. Also, a pop-up bike tune-up station will be on-site.

He stated there has been an increase in development permits submitted for review.

Commissioner Altschul requested clarification on the heights and the materials for Movietown Plaza Mixed-Use Project.

John Keho, Current and Historic Preservation Planning Manager stated the original height was ten stories, which have been reduced to six and seven stories. Staff believes the design has improved from the original design, and the materials are of good quality.

**15. PUBLIC COMMENT.** None.

**16. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS.**

Commissioner Yeber suggested possible basic guidelines for cell towers. He questioned if there is a way the code can be changed so it is not presented as a variance.

John Keho, Current and Historic Preservation Planning Manager stated staff is hoping to look into the residential design guidelines, where this could be included.

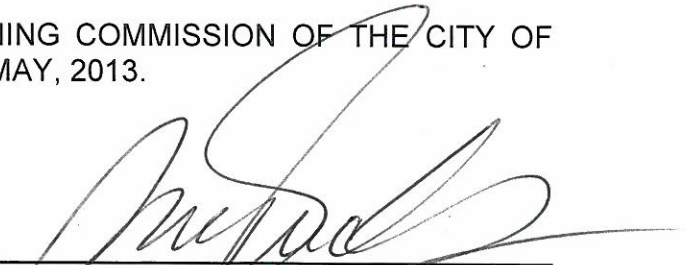
Vice-Chair DeLuccio stated there needs to be some type of oversight in residential neighborhoods for the aesthetics of cell towers. He suggested future cell towers could go before the Design Review Subcommittee before it came before the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Altschul stated his concerns about guidelines that would be geographically specific for cell towers. He suggested it would be better left to the engineers of the technological sources that use it, to see where it is best served, rather than the city trying to fix something for an aesthetic purpose.

Commissioner Huebner stated his support of the Avenues Streetscape Master Plan Update. He would like to see it implemented.

**17. ADJOURNMENT:** The Planning Commission adjourned at 7:55 P.M. to the next regularly scheduled meeting which will be on Thursday, May 16, 2013 beginning at 6:30 P.M. until completion at West Hollywood Park Public Meeting Room – Council Chambers, 625 N. San Vicente Boulevard, West Hollywood, California.  
**Motion carried by consensus of the Commission.**

APPROVED BY A MOTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF  
WEST HOLLYWOOD ON THIS 16<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF MAY, 2013.



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SUE BUCKNER, CHAIRPERSON

ATTEST:



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DAVID K. GILLIG, COMMISSION SECRETARY