



PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
Regular Meeting
October 1, 2015

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

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Altschul called the meeting of the Planning Commission to order at 6:37 P.M.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** David Aghaei led the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. **ROLL CALL:**
Commissioners Present: Buckner, DeLuccio, Huebner, Jones, Lightfoot, Vice-Chair Aghaei, *Chair Altschul.

Commissioners Absent: None.

Staff Present: Laurie Yelton, Associate Planner Stephanie Reich, Urban Designer, David DeGrazia, Current and Historic Preservation Planning Manager, Trevor Rusin, Acting Assistant City Attorney, and David Gillig, Commission Secretary.
4. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA.**
Chair Altschul requested public hearing Item 10.A. (826 N. Kings Road) moved to the end of Public Hearings, due to his required recusal of this item.

ACTION: Approve the Planning Commission Agenda of Thursday, October 1, 2015 as amended. **Moved by Vice-Chair Aghaei, seconded by Commissioner DeLuccio and unanimously passes.**
5. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES.**
A. September 17, 2015

ACTION: Approve the Planning Commission regular meeting minutes of Thursday, September 17, 2015 as presented. **Moved by Commissioner DeLuccio, seconded by Commissioner Buckner and unanimously passes.**
6. **PUBLIC COMMENT.**
CATHY BLAIVAS, WEST HOLLYWOOD commented on the project located at 8017-8029 Norton Avenue, West Hollywood, California. She clarified she is not anti-development; but is for sensible and reasonable development. She also spoke about affordable housing vs in-lieu fees.

STEPHANIE HARKER, WEST HOLLYWOOD, commented on anti-development, long-range and sensible planning, and infrastructure. She announced dates and encouraged the public to come out and see Free Shakespeare in Plummer Park; The Taming of the Shrew.

GENEVIEVE MORRILL, MARINA DEL REY, President/CEO, West Hollywood Chamber of Commerce, stated they have launched an “Eat, Shop, Play West Hollywood” campaign; stating Clear Channel donated thirteen billboards and all local businesses supported the program. She encouraged participation. She announced the 32nd Annual Creative City Awards will be on November 4, 2015 at The London Hotel; 5:30 p.m. to 10:00 pm. There will also be an after-party. She stated the winners are currently listed at www.wehoville.com

CYNTHIA BLATT, WEST HOLLYWOOD stated the city should consider allowing developers more flexibility in what they choose to develop. She commented on affordable housing units and neighborhood compatibility.

7. DIRECTOR’S REPORT.

John Keho, Assistant Community Development Director presented the Director’s Report.

At the City Council meeting be on Monday, September 21, 2015:

City Council authorized the Community Development Department to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) to invite qualified outreach firms to support staff in organizing a local community advocacy committee and a broad coalition of partners to promote light rail coming into the City of West Hollywood.

City Council asked staff to work with the Arts and Economic Development Department to look at requiring art on construction fences; and

City Council approved the 8650 Melrose Avenue project and directed staff to bring back resolutions of approval. The City Council noted the project had been changed slightly since the Planning Commission public hearing; stating the restaurant was removed; thereby eliminating the off-site parking requirement. They also directed staff to add conditions that the building should be more energy efficient, and after the building is built, constructed and occupied, staff shall do an additional traffic study. If there are any impacts identified, the applicants shall pay to mitigate those impacts.

8. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS. None.

9. CONSENT CALENDAR. None.

10. PUBLIC HEARINGS.

THE FOLLOWING ITEM WAS HEARD OUT OF ORDER AS PART OF THE AMENDED AGENDA.

B. Zone Text Amendment

Non-Residential Parking Facilities in Residential Zones:

The Planning Commission is to consider a recommendation to the City Council regarding non-residential parking in residential zones, citywide, West Hollywood, California.

Staff requested to continue the public hearing item on zone text changes to update standards for non-residential parking in residential zones. Staff re-evaluated the proposed permit requirement and additional time is needed to properly re-notice the public hearing.

ACTION: Continue to Thursday, October 15, 2015. **Motion carried by consensus of the Commission.**

**Chair Altschul recused himself from the meeting at this time; due to property ownership within 500' of the proposed project site located at 826 N. Kings Road, West Hollywood, California.*

A. 826 N. Kings Road:

Laurie Yelton, Associate Planner provided an oral and visual presentation and background information as presented in the staff report dated Thursday, October 1, 2015.

She stated the request is to demolish a single-family dwelling and construct an approximately 37,000-square-foot, four-story, twenty-five-unit apartment building with subterranean parking.

She provided a history of the project, stating the project was originally submitted as a five-story, thirty-four-unit apartment building. The original proposal included an additional floor height for a five-story building as one of the two concessions allowed by the State Density Bonus Law (SB1818) for providing on-site affordable units.

The Planning Commission reviewed and approved this item at its meeting of October 2, 2014.

The Planning Commission's decision was appealed to the City Council on May 4, 2015. City Council requested that the applicant consider an alternative design that would remove the on-site affordable housing and bonus units in order to reduce the overall scale, massing and height. City Council remanded the project back through the process; to the Planning Commission and the Historic Preservation Commission to review the re-design. A neighborhood meeting was held in which all of the neighbors that came supported the project re-design.

The revised project consists of a four-story, twenty-five unit apartment building with subterranean parking and one modification; which is a request to modify the minimum average unit size from 1,200 square-feet to 1,320 square-feet. A total of forty-eight parking spaces are required. The applicant is providing four additional guest parking spaces, for a total of fifty-two parking spaces.

Stephanie Reich, Urban Designer presented the design review report. She stated the project that came before the planning commission before was deemed exemplary design. Staff believes this project is even better, stating there have been improvements to the front façade, and modifications to the north elevations. Staff believes this is an exemplary design, which will work well on the street, it will have a nice dialogue with 825 N. Kings Road, and it is a great addition to the street.

Laurie Yelton, Associate Planner stated the Historic Preservation Commission supported the proposed project and did not believe the project had any substantial adverse impact on the Schindler House or The Charlie.

The project went to the Design Review Subcommittee on August 27, 2015. Approximately ten people spoke in support of the project design and two neighbors preferred the five-story, thirty-four -unit project with on-site affordable housing. The Subcommittee supported the design and commented that this project revision is a good compromise for both the neighbors and the applicant.

The applicant's team met with staff on-site regarding the location and re-location of the trees. As a result, staff has provided minor language changes to the conditions in the Draft Resolution No. PC 15-1146; Conditions 6.9, 7.6, 7.7, and 7.8.

Facilities and Maintenance Department has requested to add additional Conditions 7.9, 7.10, and 7.11 with regard to the replacement of the trees into the resolution. The applicant has reviewed these amended conditions.

She stated for the record staff received six emails in support of the project.

Overall, this revised project is well suited for this site and the surrounding neighborhood. The development is designed with exceptional architectural quality, is complementary to the context of the neighborhood, and meets the development standards with the exception of the one modification. Staff recommends approval of this project as conditioned by the draft Resolution.

Commissioner Lightfoot disclosed for the record she met together with the applicants and a neighborhood representative. They discussed matters contained in the staff report.

Commissioner Buckner had no official disclosures.

Commissioner Huebner had no official disclosures.

Commissioner Jones disclosed for the record she met with the applicants. They discussed matters contained in the staff report.

Commissioner DeLuccio disclosed for the record he received an email from the applicant's representative requesting a meeting. He stated a meeting was not necessary at this time.

Acting Chair Aghaei disclosed for the record he spoke with the applicant's representative. They discussed matters contained in the staff report.

Acting Chair Aghaei opened the public hearing for Item 10.A.:

RIC ABRAMSON, WEST HOLLYWOOD architect and applicant's representative, presented the applicant's report. He provided a history of the proposed project, and spoke on the design, height, scale and massing, parking; stated there are ten guest parking spaces, neighborhood context and compatibility, design process, light and air, material palette, façade alignment, landscape plan concepts, oak tree preservation, public art integration, and housing sustainability.

NORMAN HARTSTEIN, WEST HOLLYWOOD spoke in support of staff's recommendation of approval.

T. KETA HODGSON, WEST HOLLYWOOD spoke in support of staff's recommendation of approval.

BRUCE SMITH, WEST HOLLYWOOD spoke in support of staff's recommendation of approval.

ALEXANDRE PERRINELLE, WEST HOLLYWOOD spoke in support of staff's recommendation of approval.

SUSAN PINKUS, WEST HOLLYWOOD spoke in support of staff's recommendation of approval.

CYNTHIA BLATT, WEST HOLLYWOOD spoke in support of staff's recommendation of approval.

LINDI WEINSTEIN, WEST HOLLYWOOD spoke in support of staff's recommendation of approval.

IVY BOTTINI, WEST HOLLYWOOD spoke in support of staff's recommendation of approval.

TONY ARN, WEST HOLLYWOOD spoke in support of staff's recommendation of approval.

GENEVIEVE MORRILL, MARINA DEL REY, President/CEO, West Hollywood Chamber of Commerce, spoke in support of staff's recommendation of approval.

ANDREA FERRETTI, WEST HOLLYWOOD spoke in support of staff's recommendation of approval.

DIXIE MCKIE, WEST HOLLYWOOD spoke in support of staff's recommendation of approval.

STEPHANIE J. HARKER, WEST HOLLYWOOD spoke in support of staff's recommendation of approval.

DARLENE CHAN, WEST HOLLYWOOD spoke in support of staff's recommendation of approval.

HOB TUMS, WEST HOLLYWOOD spoke in support of staff's recommendation of approval.

CATHY BLAIVAS, WEST HOLLYWOOD spoke in support of staff's recommendation of approval.

CHARLES ANTEBY, WEST HOLLYWOOD spoke in support of staff's recommendation of approval.

MICHAEL WOJTKIELEWICZ, WEST HOLLYWOOD spoke in support of staff's recommendation of approval.

VICTOR OMELCZENKO, WEST HOLLYWOOD spoke in support of staff's recommendation of approval.

THE FOLLOWING CHOSE NOT TO PUBLICLY SPEAK. THEY SUPPORT STAFF'S RECOMMENDATION OF APPROVAL: ROBERT SWITZER, WEST HOLLYWOOD, LARRY TRACY, WEST HOLLYWOOD, TED DIETLIN, WEST HOLLYWOOD, DENISE MC CANLES, WEST HOLLYWOOD, MICHELLE MINDLIN, WEST HOLLYWOOD, MARTIN LOWERY, WEST HOLLYWOOD, RANDY BARRIOS, WEST HOLLYWOOD, GEORGE CREDLE, WEST HOLLYWOOD, ROBERT GURVAL, WEST HOLLYWOOD, STAN MADSEN, WEST HOLLYWOOD, FRAN MADSON, WEST HOLLYWOOD, DAVID ANGSTON, WEST HOLLYWOOD, GARY MORE, WEST HOLLYWOOD, GGARY SWINTON, WEST HOLLYWOOD, BRUCE GILBERT, WEST HOLLYWOOD, FRANCOISE LAZARD, WEST HOLLYWOOD, CAROL PROP, WEST HOLLYWOOD.

RIC ABRAMSON, WEST HOLLYWOOD architect and applicant's representative, presented the applicant's rebuttal. He clarified the driveway position; stating the driveway needs to be where it is to make this project work. It cannot be located later. He stated his support of Condition 6.9.

He spoke regarding preserving the mature trees on-site, and commented there were a couple of trees for possible relocation in the parkway. Unfortunately the conditions that were brought forward by staff are onerous. He stated he would like the commission to direct staff to simplify those. He stated they would like to relocate two trees identified in the arborist report. Condition 7.6 currently states "all trees." He would like the condition amended to read "two trees" as identified.

He had concerns and stated the condition has become way too complicated regarding the required posting of bonds, security interests, quarterly and semi-annually monitoring. He stated in the end the applicant has committed to making a beautiful parkway. He clarified what they would prefer would be to relocate the trees; if for some reason they do not survive the relocation, the developer is more than happy to replace the trees with the required trees at the time. He requested the commission to direct staff for a simple preserve, relocate and replace if needed.

He stated his support of Conditions 7.7 and 7.11.

Discussion was held regarding the trees, possible amendments to the language in the conditions, and if this item needs to be brought back as a Consent Calendar item.

Trevor Rusin, Acting Assistant City Attorney, clarified the commission may direct staff to come back with a resolution that incorporates a simpler consolidation of the conditions.

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

Commissioner DeLuccio commended the applicant, neighbors and staff for all the work that has gone into this project. He stated it is a lovely design and it is now compatible with the neighborhood. He spoke regarding neighborhood meetings, and commented on the landscaping that has been enhanced, the additional guest parking, and the reduction in the massing and scaling. He stated his support of the project.

Commissioner Buckner commended the applicant, neighbors and staff for all the work that has gone into this project. She spoke regarding the process, and how neighborhood meetings are extremely beneficial. She encouraged staff to work with developers early in the process to engage the neighbors and neighborhoods. She stated her support of the project.

Commissioner Lightfoot commended the applicant, neighbors and staff for all the work that has gone into this project. She stated this is reasonable development, and this project meets the spirit of the General Plan; regarding the preservation of the character of the neighborhoods. She stated this project is truly compatible with the neighborhood, and she reiterated her support of the developers who have made extraordinary efforts to work with the neighbors. She encouraged staff to work with developers early in the process to engage the neighbors and neighborhoods.

Commissioner Huebner stated he liked the project before, but the project has definitely improved. He commented this design is much more respectable and sensitive to the architecture of the surrounding area. He commended the applicant, neighbors and staff for all the work that has gone into this project. He stated his encouragement of the process and is excited to see this project built.

Commissioner Jones commended the applicant, neighbors and staff for all the work that has gone into this project. She commented on the renderings and the design process. She stated her support of the project.

Acting Chair Aghaei commended the applicant, neighbors and staff for all the work that has gone into this project. He stated his support of the project.

Trevor Rusin, Acting Assistant City Attorney, confirmed the motion would be to direct staff to return with a revised resolution; Conditions 7.9 and 7.10; eliminating the bond, and reducing the reporting requirements.

Commissioner DeLuccio moved to: 1) bring back a resolution of approval on Consent Calendar; and 2) simplify the language regarding Conditions 6.9 through Condition 7.11.

Seconded by Commissioner Huebner.

Discussion was held regarding the actual number of conditions to amend, the type of trees to be relocated, and the specific language for Conditions 6.9 through 7.11.

Trevor Rusin, Acting Assistant City Attorney, confirmed and clarified the motion: 1) direct staff to return with a resolution of approval; 2) adjust Condition 7.6 to read “two trees” (not “all trees”); 3) consolidate the conditions; 4) remove any bond requirement; and 5) reduce the reporting requirements.

Commissioner DeLuccio agreed to this clarification.

Commissioner Huebner agreed to the clarification.

ACTION: 1) Return with a resolution of approval; 2) adjust Condition 7.6 to read “two trees” (not “all trees”); 3) consolidate the conditions; 4) remove any bond requirement; and 5) reduce the reporting requirements. **Moved by Commissioner DeLuccio, seconded by Commissioner Huebner and passes; noting Chair Altschul ABSTAINED.**

11. NEW BUSINESS. None.

12. UNFINISHED BUSINESS. None.

13. EXCLUDED CONSENT CALENDAR. None.

14. ITEMS FROM STAFF.

A. Planning Manager’s Update.

David DeGrazia, Current & Historic Preservation Planning Manager provided an update of upcoming projects.

15. PUBLIC COMMENT.

MICHAEL WOJKIELEWICZ, WEST HOLLYWOOD commented on the previous project at 8017-8029 Norton Avenue, West Hollywood, California. He spoke regarding disabled access, affordable housing and the Sierra Bonita housing project.

VICTOR OMELCZENKO, WEST HOLLYWOOD commented on outreach and inclusivity of neighborhood meetings, historic properties, neighborhood compatibility, and future appeals.

GEORGE CREDLE, WEST HOLLYWOOD commented on the proactive and positive proceedings of tonight’s commission meeting, and spoke regarding the upcoming appeal of the 1216 N. Flores Street project.

16. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS.

Commissioner Jones reiterated she is available to meet and discuss planning commission issues and concerns.

17. ADJOURNMENT: The Planning Commission adjourned at 8:20 P.M. to a regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, October 15, 2015 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.**

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED by the Planning Commission of the City of West Hollywood at a regular meeting held this 15th day of October, 2015 by the following vote:

AYES: Commissioner: Buckner, DeLuccio, Jones, Lightfoot, Vice-Chair Aghaei, Chair Altschul.

NOES: Commissioner: None.

ABSENT: Commissioner: Huebner.

ABSTAIN: Commissioner: None.



JOHN ALTSCHUL, CHAIRPERSON

ATTEST:



DAVID K. GILLIG, COMMISSION SECRETARY