



**CITY OF SOUTH PASADENA
Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, May 11, 2021, 6:30 PM
Via Zoom Teleconference**

CALL TO ORDER:

A regular scheduled meeting of the South Pasadena Planning Commission was called to order by Chair Lesak on Tuesday, May 11, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. The meeting was held via Zoom.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Chair: John Lesak
Vice-Chair: Lisa Padilla
Commissioners: Amitabh Barthakur, Janet Braun, and Laura Dahl

City Staff

Present: Andrew Jared, City Attorney
Joanna Hankamer, Planning & Community Development Director
Kanika Kith, Planning Manager
Jennifer Williams, Contract Planner
Veronica Ortiz-De Anda, Contract Planner

Council

Present: Council Liaison: Diana Mahmud, Mayor

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Approved, 5-0.

DISCLOSURE OF SITE VISITS AND EX-PARTE CONTACTS:

Commissioner Dahl, Vice-Chair Padilla, and Chair Lesak visited or drove by 23 Short Way and 1502 Indiana Avenue, Items 1 and 2, respectively, on tonight's agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Director Hankamer announced that there was one (1) written comment and one (1) audio comment from the same commenter, Anthony Deduces, Director of Policy and Research at Abundant Housing LA, which was played for the Commission. Staff confirmed that the public comment was posted to the City's website.

PUBLIC HEARING:

1. **23 Short Way, Project No. 2309-HDP/DRX/PM/NID/TRP, Hillside Development Permit, Design Review, Parcel Merger, Notice of Intent to Demolish and Tree Permit to demolish an existing single-family home and construction of a new single-family home, the merger of two parcels, and the removal of three (3) trees at 23 Short Way (APN 5312-030-007).**

Recommendation:

Approve the project as submitted by staff, subject to the conditions of approval.

Staff Presentation:

Contract Planner Williams presented the project.

Questions for Staff:

The Commissioners inquired about the merger of the two lots, the status of the review of the project by the Fire Department (no conditions from the Fire Department were included with the submittal), the requested approval of the ADU, and the location and handling of an oak tree.

In light of written comments from residents concerning construction traffic and parking, staff was asked to confirm where contractors and crews would park, and how traffic would be organized and managed to minimize the impacts on other residents in that area.

Contract Planner Williams referred to Public Works Conditions of Approval Nos. 9, 10, 11, and 12 which specifically addressed these issues, and Planning Commission Conditions of Approval P-13 related to construction management and road haul routes, off-site construction staging areas, and parking areas where workers or contractors could park.

Chair Lesak asked about the front setback, noted the drawings were incorrect and requested drawings which accurately reflect the setback.

Mayor Mahmud expressed concern about the lack of any Fire Department conditions and asked staff to follow up to confirm there were no concerns.

Public Comments:

Two individual comments were received: one (1) from a neighbor in support, but who raised parking issues during construction, and one (1) from a neighbor in opposition to the project who submitted two (2) emails. The comments were posted to the City's website.

Applicant's Presentation:

Contract Planner Williams played the Applicant's prerecorded presentation.

Applicant's Rebuttal:

The property owner, Pokil Wong, addressed comments from a neighbor who expressed a concern about overdeveloping the site, the square footage of the residence, and the lot size. He provided insight as to why the site was selected.

Questions for Applicant:

Vice-Chair Padilla and the architects discussed the materials chosen and the use of a product for siding unfamiliar to the Commission.

Chair Lesak asked the Applicant about the front setback and the placement of the residence on the lot.

Commissioner Discussion:

Several Commissioners expressed concern about the front setback and how it compared to the setbacks of neighboring homes and buildings. They also noted corrections to the Conditions of Approval – P-1 (four (4) trees to be corrected to three (3)) and Condition 21 (reference to the ADU as a Junior ADU). They also discussed the concerns about the materials chosen that were unfamiliar to them, including their availability and longevity.

Planning Manager Kith confirmed that the project falls under the purview of the existing ADU Ordinance.

The Applicant and homeowner expressed flexibility to using a different material for the siding of the house to address the Commissioners concerns. After a short discussion, the Commissioners determined the Applicant should be allowed to use the materials presented to the Commission.

It was decided to include a condition that if a Fire Department condition substantially changed the design of the project, then the Chair of the Planning Commission shall review and approve the design prior to issuance of the building permit. The Chair will have discretion to review and approve the project or refer it to the Planning Commission.

In addition, the Commissioners, City Attorney and staff agreed that the Applicant should provide water flow tests from the City of South Pasadena Water Department along with its submittal.

Decision:

Commissioner Braun motioned, seconded by Vice-Chair Padilla, to approve Project No. 2309-HDP/DRX/PM/NID/TRP, for a Hillside Permit, Design Review,

Parcel Merger, Notice of Intent to Demolish and Tree Permit to demolish an existing single family home and construction of a new single-family home, the merger of two parcels, and the removal of three (3) trees at 23 Short Way (APN 5312-030-007), subject to adding the Conditions discussed, including compliance with the California Building and Fire Codes and any other requirements that the South Pasadena Fire Department may require to be confirmed by the Planning Department. If any of those new requirements from the Fire Department substantially change the design, then the Chair of the Planning Commission will have discretion to either approve or send the project back to the Planning Commission. Also, adding the same Condition FD-11 from Item 2 on today's agenda about the water flow test as a condition to this project, as well. The Tree Permit is to remove three (3) trees. Also, the Resolution approves the Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) that has been proposed as part of this project.

Chair Lesak called for Roll Call.

Commissioner Barthakur	Aye
Commissioner Dahl	Aye
Commissioner Braun	Aye
Vice-Chair Padilla	Aye
Chair Lesak	Aye

Motion carried, 5-0.

- 2. 1502 Indiana Avenue, Project No. 2319-HDP/DRX/VAR, Hillside Development Permit, Design Review, Two Variances, Tree Removal Permit to construct a multi-level single-family home and attached accessory dwelling unit at 1502 Indiana Avenue (APN 5314-006-020).**

Recommendation:

Approve the project as submitted by staff, subject to the Conditions of Approval.

Staff Presentation:

Contract Planner Ortiz-De Anda presented the staff report.

Questions for Staff:

The Commissioners inquired about: the floor area ratio (FAR) calculation; the natural space requirement; the Public Works Director's recommendation that the project did not need to be reviewed by the NREC; the designated walk easement; and clarification of the requested variance and how it compared with requests on other projects in the area.

Public Comment:

One (1) public comment which concerned storm drain pipes was received from a property owner who lives in the neighborhood above the project.

Applicant Presentation:

None. However, homeowner Kirk Nakagawa provided a background history of his family in the area and insight as to how the site was selected.

Questions for Applicant:

Chair Lesak asked for clarification of the color of the stone siding and for more detail regarding the railings. He noted the sectional drawings were difficult to read and review.

Discussion:

The Commissioners agreed that revisiting some of the standard variances the Commission had considered previously would be informative.

The Commissioners appreciated that this project had been under review by staff for a long time. Given the issues raised tonight about the natural open space and FAR compliance, they would like to see this project again with more accurate information so that they could make a more informed decision on it. The Commissioners concurred that the drawings were difficult to review and need to be improved and clearer. As this is a design review, the Commission needs to have accurate details, *e.g.*, what the railings are going to be; consistency in windows either being horizontally oriented or vertically oriented, *etc.* Chair Lesak offered to meet with the Applicant.

Planning Manager Kith reported on the variance percentages in the area.

Decision:

Chair Lesak motioned, seconded by Vice-Chair Padilla, to continue this project to a subsequent meeting to give the Applicant time to clean up the information on the drawings, look at the cladding materials, design a proper railing for above the garage and the stairs, and further study some of the architectural details, such as the soffits, to June 8th, the next regular meeting.

Chair Lesak called for Roll Call:

Commissioner Barthakur	Aye
Commissioner Dahl	Aye
Commissioner Braun	Aye
Vice-Chair Padilla	Aye
Chair Lesak	Aye

Motion carried, 5-0.

- 3. 89 Monterey Road, Project No. 2197-HDP/DR/VAR, Hillside Development Permit, Design Review and Variance to construct a new single-family detached home located at 89 Monterey Road (APN 5312-031-027).**

Recommendation:

Staff recommends to continue this item to the Regular Planning Commission meeting of June 8, 2021.

Decision:

Chair Lesak motioned, seconded by Commissioner Braun, to continue this item to the June 8th meeting.

Chair Lesak called for Roll Call:

Commissioner Barthakur	Aye
Commissioner Dahl	Aye
Commissioner Braun	Aye
Vice-Chair Padilla	Aye
Chair Lesak	Aye

Motion carried, 5-0.

ADMINISTRATION

- 4. Comments from City Council Liaison:**

Council Liaison Mahmud thanked the Commission for all their hard work and dedication.

- 5. Comments from Planning Commissioners:**

Vice-Chair Padilla remarked on the hillside variance topic and would encourage whoever studies it to evaluate the outcome of the projects.

Chair Lesak reported that he attended the Planning Commissioner Academy hosted by the League of California Cities. He would definitely encourage attendance in future years because it was content rich and enlightening.

- 6. Comments from Staff:**

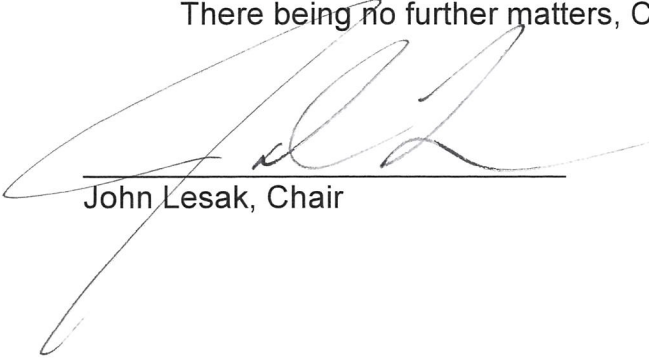
Director Hankamer thanked the Commission for being available on March 26th for the update of the Housing Element. She reminded everyone that on April 21st, City Council had second readings of the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance (IHO) and the ADU Ordinance. She congratulated and thanked the Commission for their input and the City Council for their approval. The IHO is in effect right now due to an

Urgency Ordinance. The ADU Ordinance will go into effect on May 21st. She also reported that an RFP was distributed yesterday for the In-Lieu Fee study for the IHO. Proposals should be received within the next few weeks and a consultant should be on board by June to help determine what the In-Lieu Fee should be. She added that there is discussion of City Hall opening soon by appointment in some cases and discussion about in-person public meetings returning in the near future.

ADJOURNMENT:

7. Adjournment to the Special Planning Commission meeting scheduled on May 26, 2021:

There being no further matters, Chair Lesak adjourned the meeting at 9:00 p.m.



John Lesak, Chair