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**CITY OF SIERRA MADRE  
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES**

Regular Meeting of  
Thursday, October 19, 2017 at 7:00 p.m.  
City Council Chambers, 232 W. Sierra Madre Blvd.

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**CALL TO ORDER**

14 Acting Chair Hutt called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

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**ROLL CALL**

22 Present: Chair Spears, Vice Chair Hutt, Commissioners Catalano, Denison, Desai,  
23 Frierman-Hunt  
24 Absent: Commissioner Pevsner  
25 Staff: Vincent Gonzalez, Director of Planning and Community Preservation  
26 Jennifer Peterson, Administrative Analyst  
27 Jonathan Perez, Assistant Planner  
28 Terri Highsmith, City Attorney

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**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

34 Commissioner Desai moved to approve the agenda. Vice Chair Hutt seconded. Motion  
35 carried unanimously.

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**APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF SEPT 21, 2017**

41 Vice Chair Hutt moved to approve the minutes. Commissioner Desai seconded.  
42 Motion carried (Commissioners Catalano and Denison abstained)

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**APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF OCTOBER 5, 2017**

Commissioner Catalano stated that line 65 should read, "Culture of good  
craftsmanship".

Vice Chair Hutt moved to approve the minutes with noted correction. Commissioner  
Denison seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

**AUDIENCE COMMENTS**

None.

**DISCUSSION**

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**DESIGN REVIEW PERMIT 17-02 (DRP 17-02)**

502 E. Sierra Madre Blvd.  
Peter & Sarah Hornbeck

Chair Spears stated that he would need to recuse himself due to owning property within the 300 foot radius.

Assistant Planner Perez delivered the Staff Report & PowerPoint presentation.

Commissioner Catalano inquired if the addition is in compliance with required setback.

Assistant Planner Perez confirmed that it is.

Commissioner Frierman-Hunt inquired if the second floor is slightly set back to meet angle plane. Assistant Planner Perez confirmed that it is.

Commissioner Catalano asked if staff had received any feedback from the neighbors.

Assistant Planner Perez stated that they had one phone call with no follow up.

Peter Meeken

Applicant

Mr. Meeken provided the project history and need for addition as well as their design process.

Commissioner Catalano commended the applicant that the form and massing was done very well. He inquired why the applicant chose not to have a window in bedroom on second floor.

Mr. Meeken stated that allergies and asthma a concern, and a single clean wall for the bed is necessary.

Commissioner Catalano felt that the applicant did well with rejuvenation of California Ranch style, but feels that the lack of window is inconsistent with style. He stated that he would prefer a window on that wall.

Sarah Hornbeck

Applicant

Ms. Hornbeck stated that if a window is required that they would try to redesign, but really concerned with health issues.

Commissioner Desai inquired if they were planning that their bed headboard will be on east/solid wall.

Mr. Meeken stated that that is correct as it is the best layout for size and traffic of room.

Mr. Meeken explained their design process wherein they considered what they wanted vs what neighbors wanted.

Mr. Meeken inquired about the implications of changing after DDP issued

90 Vice Chair Hutt stated that staff will review to confirm that you are building in substantial  
91 conformity. He stated that if it is the applicant's desire to change east elevation, that  
92 they might consider continuing the matter for further discussion.

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94 Commissioner Desai inquired if the 8 foot ceiling height on the addition and second  
95 story portion is adequate.

96 Mr. Meeken stated that it is consistent with rest of the house and feels that it is  
97 sufficient.

98 Ms. Hornbeck stated that, at the time of drawing, they were trying to keep it as low as  
99 possible, but may want to consider an increase.

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101 The Commission had a general discussion of options with the height.

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103 **DISCUSSION**

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105 Commissioner Frierman-Hunt stated that she preferred the design in report rather than  
106 the option presented this evening. She felt that the window situation is acceptable due  
107 to the health concerns. She stated that she liked the minimization of bulk & mass. She  
108 also stated that looking at median size of house is more helpful than looking at average  
109 size. She stated that she has no issues with this project.

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111 Commissioner Desai stated that he has no issues with the overall massing. He stated  
112 that his only concern is that a lot of this project is shrouded from view. He stated that he  
113 can appreciate being considerate of neighbors, but is concerned that the applicant is  
114 sacrificing functional height for good of neighborhood. Commissioner Desai felt that it  
115 wouldn't affect the aesthetic of the project to shift a bit to the east. He felt that it would  
116 give the project a bit of breathing room. He also stated that he felt that if the project  
117 grew in height by a foot would be better for applicant in functionality. He felt that the  
118 project was better served by leaving the ground floor depressed and increasing height  
119 on second floor. Commissioner Desai stated that he does not have an issue making  
120 the findings.

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122 Commissioner Denison felt that it is very thoughtful of the applicant to consider the  
123 neighbors. He stated that, as submitted there are no red flags.

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125 Commissioner Catalano felt that this is a really good project. He stated that he is ok with  
126 window because of health issue. He also agreed that adding a foot in height would not  
127 adversely affect project. Commissioner Catalano stated that, relatively speaking this is  
128 a small addition to a modest size house to begin with. He also felt that the project is  
129 situated just right on the site.

130  
131 Vice Chair Hutt concurred with all Commissioners. He commended the applicant on the  
132 project and presentation. Regarding the east elevation, he felt that the project was far  
133 enough setback that it doesn't affect neighbors. Vice Chair Hutt would prefer see some  
134 kind of articulation and feel that it would improve resale value. He stated also that he

135 is also ok with an increase in height by one foot. Vice Chair Hutt agreed with  
136 Commissioner Frierman-Hunt that the median statistic is most helpful.

137  
138 The Commission discussed the potential of adding to the height of the project. They  
139 agreed by consensus that an addition of a maximum of 1' foot height and some  
140 additional fenestration would be acceptable to be reviewed at a staff level. They  
141 agreed that anything greater than that would require additional review by the  
142 Commission.

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144 **ACTION: Commissioner Desai moved to approve Planning Commission**  
145 **resolution 17-09, approving Design Review Permit 17-02 with conditions as**  
146 **discussed. Commissioner Catalano seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

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148 (Chair Spears returned)

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150 **DISCUSSION REGARDING AMENDMENTS TO THE MUNICIPAL CODE CHAPTER**  
151 **17.56 – NON CONFORMING USES ORDINANCE**

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153 Director Gonzalez explained the possibility of adding additional subcommittee  
154 members.

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156 Vice Chair Hutt detailed the commitment level, expectation, and work still to be done.  
157 Chair Spears volunteered.

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159 **ORAL COMMUNICATION**

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161 **Audience**

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163 None.

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165 **Planning Commission**

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167 Commissioner Catalano stated that he was no longer on the Board of Directors of the  
168 Historical Society.

169 Commissioner Frierman-Hunt stated that she would be absent next meeting  
170 Chair Spears noted that the Great Shake Out was today, and it is a good day to plan  
171 and check your emergency supplies.

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173 **Planning & Community Preservation Staff**

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175 Director Gonzalez shared details of the grand opening event for Highland Mews.  
176 He also stated that staff was working to bring the Nonconforming Ordinance discussion  
177 to the next meeting.

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181 Chair Spears adjourned the Planning Commission meeting at 8:15 p.m.

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Secretary to the Planning Commission

186 Vincent Gonzalez, Director of Planning & Community Preservation

