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**CITY OF SIERRA MADRE
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
Regular Meeting of
Thursday, October 3, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.
City Council Chambers, 232 W. Sierra Madre Blvd.**

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CALL TO ORDER

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Chair Hutt called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

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ROLL CALL

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Present: Chair Hutt, Vice Chair Denison, Commissioners Dallas, Pevsner, Spears
Absent: Commissioners Catalano, Desai
Staff: Vincent Gonzalez, Director of Planning and Community Preservation
Clare Lin, Associate Planner
Jennifer Peterson, Administrative Analyst
Aleks Giragosian, Deputy City Attorney

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APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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Commissioner Spears moved to approve the agenda. Vice Chair Denison seconded.
Motion carried unanimously.

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APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF AUGUST 1, 2019 AND SEPTEMBER 19, 2019

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Chair Hutt requested corrections on the August 1, 2019 minutes on lines #106-108.
Chair Hutt moved to approve both sets of minutes as amended. These items were
continued to the next regularly scheduled meeting.

AUDIENCE COMMENTS

None.

PUBLIC HEARING

1. **HILLSIDE DEVELOPMENT PERMIT 15-07 (HDP 15-07) AND CONDITIONAL USE
PERMIT 15-07 (CUP 15-07)**
Address: 600 Baldwin Court (Lot 25)
Applicant: C.E.T.T.

Associate Planner Lin delivered the Staff Report and Power Point Presentation.

Everardo Garcia
LCRA Architecture

Mr. Garcia delivered a PowerPoint presentation.

46 Mr. Garcia shared the challenges of this site, particularly the visibility of the lot from
47 adjoining streets, and the size and irregularly shaped site. He also indicated that he
48 would like to retain a rear yard pad to allow for usable outdoor space.
49

50 Commissioner Spears stated that he liked the setback of the house from Carter Avenue.
51 He also stated that he would like to see the house move closer toward Baldwin Court in
52 an effort to reduce the second-story massing of the building.
53

54 Chair Hutt expressed that the largest issue is the narrow vertical appearance of the
55 house. There is a possibility to position the house to the north, allowing encroachment
56 of the first floor into the front yard setback.
57

58 Commissioner Denison stated that he would like to see the house loom less over Carter
59 Avenue; is supportive of the concept of reducing the front yard setback to allow the
60 house to be positioned closer to Baldwin Court.
61

62 **Public Comment**

63
64 Sara Jane Harman
65 Baldwin Court

66 Ms. Harman requested that the Commission resume the requirement for story poles for
67 development sites. She also spoke about the responsibility of the maintenance of the
68 smaller hillside.
69

70 **Discussion**

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72 Commissioner Spears encouraged the applicant to include additional oak trees along
73 Carter Avenue and on the adjacent Lot 26 to diffuse the look of house from the street.
74 He also proposed to plant the trees now to allow them to mature in advance of
75 construction. It was also noted that that the lot area in front of the “parlor” is not fully
76 utilized—indicating that the program could be expanded into this area of the lot in an
77 effort to reduce second-story massing. He also stated that he favors the color palette
78 and that the overall design effort is a good first pass.
79

80 Commissioner Dallas noted that the project location is a prominent corner and a
81 challenging site. She liked the craftsman style and detail. She also liked the interior
82 floor plan. She also encouraged planting to screen the building from street view and
83 that the south elevation could support a first-floor trellis to break up the massing of the
84 overall elevation. Expressed concerns about reducing the front yard setback adjoining
85 Baldwin Court. This effort would disrupts the consistency of the street scape and would
86 set a precedent. Commissioner Dallas also agreed with the requirement of story poles.
87

88 Commissioner Pevsner agreed with previous commissioners that the house would be
89 better situated more to the rear of the lot. He stated that he liked the symmetry of the
90 roofs, but would like to see the mass moved back.
91

92 Vice Chair Denison stated that the purview of the Commission is not over the size of the
93 pad or lot; the Commission must follow the Stonegate Design Guidelines. He stated
94 that he appreciates the stepped parlor, and feels that it is a good start. There is future
95 opportunity to dig into the slope to further reduce overall massing, citing Stonegate
96 Guidelines A.2.8 and A.2.9—addressing the use of stepped pads and footings. He also
97 stated that he would like to see the second-story set further back to reduce bulk and
98 mass—citing Stonegate Design Guideline A.2.3—minimizing the building against the
99 skyline. Vice Chair Denison preferred to leave the garage in its current location. He
100 stated that the color scheme complies with Section D-5—Materials- Color and Finish of
101 the Stonegate Design Guidelines. Add additional deck to soften the second story south
102 elevation. He also agreed in with Commission comments to push the building into the
103 front setback.

104
105 Chair Hutt stated that his biggest concern was the massing. Need to reduce the
106 second-story volume. Lower the elevation of the “parlor,” and move the footprint closer
107 to the west and “sink it down.” Encroach into the front yard setback up to 15 feet except
108 the garage. Expressed concern with interface of building with the adjoining Lot 26.
109 Consider a 15-foot side yard setback on the east to allow for greater building
110 separation. Supports planting of additional oak trees on Lot 26 adjacent to Carter
111 Avenue and to donate such trees to the homeowners association. Also, consider getting
112 rid of use of faux stone.

113
114 The Commission discussed the potential for allowing encroachment into the front yard
115 setback.

116
117 Chair Hutt indicated that we don’t have a standard setback in the Hillside Management
118 Zone. This lot is unique and different because it has a 25-foot setback on three sides.

119
120 Commissioner Spears indicated that Lot 26 is a flag lot configuration, the building will be
121 setback further from the street, exhibiting a streetscape with a meandering view.

122
123 Everardo Garcia
124 LCRA

125 Mr. Garcia thanked the Commission for their comments, and stated that he may explore
126 the option of the porch encroaching into the setback.

127
128 **Action: Vice Chair Denison moved to continue this item to November 21, 2019.**
129 **Commissioner Spears seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

- 130
131 **2. DISCRETIONARY DEMOLITION PERMIT 19-05 (DDP 19-05) AND DESIGN**
132 **REVIEW PERMIT 19-08 (DRP 19-08)**
133 **Address: 287 East Montecito Avenue**
134 **Applicant: Marc and Vanessa Roberts**

135
136 Director Gonzalez delivered the Staff Report.
137

138 Cole Butler
139 Architect
140 Ms. Butler stated that the landscape architect, historian and property owner are also
141 available to address any comments.

142
143 Commissioner Spears confirmed that the garage is not historic. Director Gonzalez
144 stated that it was constructed in 1969.
145 Commissioner Spears inquired if the porch on the garage will look into the neighbor's
146 yard to the west. Ms. Butler stated that privacy will be a priority.
147 Commissioner Spears inquired about the Olive Tree on the east side of the property,
148 indicating that this tree posed a fire concern.

149
150 Sean Mastretti
151 Landscape Architect
152 Mr. Mastretti stated that he believed that tree is slated for removal.

153
154 **Public Comment**

155
156 Katherine Budworth
157 Neighbor to West
158 Ms. Budworth spoke in favor of the project.

159
160 **Discussion**

161
162 Commissioner Pevsner felt that this is an improvement on the property, and in keeping
163 with the spirit of the style of the home.

164
165 Vice Chair Denison appreciated the attention to detail, and was satisfied that his
166 concerns of neighbor impact were addressed regarding the roof top garage deck.

167
168 Commissioner Spears shared his own experience renovating a historic home. He
169 requested that undergrounding utilities would be a Condition of Approval. He also
170 encouraged planting more trees at the east and west yards to screen views to
171 neighboring properties. Spears noted that the concrete block wall surrounding outdoor
172 kitchen is not attractive—select alternate material for staff review. Referenced use of
173 distressed concrete to reflect existing concrete steps on the east elevation.

174
175 Commissioner Dallas felt that the project did a good job of stitching the old and the new.
176 She felt that the landscaping is appropriate and well thought out. She stated that she is
177 in favor of this project.

178
179 Chair Hutt noted that the size of the house is not an undue burden to neighbors. He
180 stated that he could make all of the findings. He also noted Finding 8-b—project
181 complies with the preservation of the historic fabric of the house. Chair Hutt also
182 agreed with the condition of undergrounding the utilities; and utilizing real stone or other

183 material for the outdoor kitchen. He also stated that he was very impressed with the
184 water saving landscape features.

185
186 The Commission requested that the following Conditions of Approval be added:

- 187 ▪ Underground all utilities (telephone/cable).
- 188 ▪ Add additional trees to the east and west yards to minimize views to
- 189 neighboring properties.
- 190 ▪ Select alternate building material for outdoor kitchen that blends with the
- 191 architectural features of the building. Work with staff to finalize material.

192
193 **Action: Commissioner Denison moved to approve Discretionary Demolition**
194 **Permit 19-05, and Design Review Permit 19-08 and Planning Commission**
195 **resolution 19-10. Commissioner Spears seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

196
197 **Oral Communication**

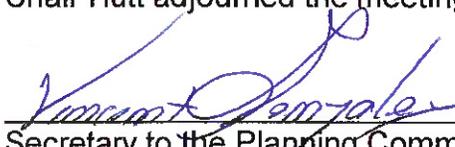
198
199 **Audience**
200 None.

201
202 **Planning Commission**
203 The Commission welcomed new Commissioner Peggy Dallas.

204
205 **Staff**
206 Director Gonzalez stated that the next meeting is scheduled for October 17, 2019,
207 however at this point there are no items scheduled.

208
209 Chair Hutt inquired about agendizing a parking discussion. Director Gonzalez
210 suggested involving the Public Works Director in that discussion as well. Director
211 Gonzalez stated that we will likely cancel the October 17, 2019 meeting and return with
212 the Commercial Code discussion in November or December.

213
214 Chair Hutt adjourned the meeting at 9:10 p.m.

215
216 
217 _____
218 Secretary to the Planning Commission
219 Vincent Gonzalez, Director of Planning & Community Preservation