

1
2
3 **CITY OF SIERRA MADRE**
4 **PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES**
5 Regular Meeting of
6 Thursday, November 3, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.
7 City Council Chambers, 232 W. Sierra Madre Blvd.
8

9 **CALL TO ORDER**

10
11 Chair Frierman-Hunt called the meeting to order at 7:27 p.m.
12

13 **ROLL CALL**

14
15 **Present:** Chair Frierman-Hunt, Vice Chair Spears, Commissioners Desai, Hutt,
16 Pevsner
17 **Absent:** Commissioners Buckles, Hinton
18 **Staff:** Vincent Gonzalez, Director of Planning & Community Preservation
19 Leticia Cardoso, Planning Manager
20 Jennifer Peterson, Administrative Analyst
21 Terri Highsmith, City Attorney
22

23 **REPORT FROM CLOSED SESSION**

24
25 City Attorney Highsmith provided the report from closed session. She stated that no
26 action had been taken.
27

28 **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

29
30 Commissioner Hutt moved to approve the agenda. Vice Chair Spears seconded.
31 Motion carried unanimously.
32

33 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF OCTOBER 20, 2016**

34
35 Commissioner Desai abstained. Vice Chair Spears moved to approve the minutes.
36 Commissioner Hutt seconded. Motion carried unanimously.
37

38 **AUDIENCE COMMENT**

39
40 None.
41

42 **PUBLIC HEARING**

43
44 **1. DISCRETIONARY DEMOLITION PERMIT 16-01 (DDP 16-01)**
45 **Address: 126 East Mira Monte Avenue**
46 **Applicant: William and Anastasia Kefalas**
47

48 Director Gonzalez delivered the staff report which included background and details of the project.
49
50 The Commission discussed the definition and what constitutes a “Demolition” according
51 to Sierra Madre Municipal Code.
52

53 **Public Comment**

54
55 William Kefalas
56 Applicant

57 Mr. Kefalas thanked the Planning Commission and the community for their concern about
58 the project. He provided clarification on the removal of the roof, stating it was not removed
59 for safety purposes alone. Mr. Kefalas stated that he met with the City plan checker
60 (Hong Tam) to clarify the approach to sister the existing rafters. Mr. Kefalas stated that
61 he received approval from the City to remove and reframe the roof. He stated that work
62 on the project had been voluntarily stopped, while guidance could be sought from the city
63 engineer. Mr. Kefalas stated that he has no desire to alter the Conditional Use Permit,
64 approved plans or foundation, and that he is taking the replica aspect very seriously,
65 however safety needs to be a priority.
66

67 The Commission discussed with the applicant the removal of the roof, the Discretionary
68 Demolition Permit process and its application to this project.
69

70 The Commission discussed options for providing a historic assessment of the property.
71

72 Barbara Leigh Cline
73 Grandview Ave.

74 Ms. Cline spoke in favor of the Planning Commission working towards a solution with the
75 applicant, and also of reevaluating the demolition permit process.
76

77 Teryl Willis
78 Carter Ave.

79 Ms. Willis spoke of past experiences with developers and spoke in favor of consequences
80 for demolition.
81

82 Joe Catalano
83 Lima Ave.

84 Mr. Catalano spoke in favor of other framing options and suggested a compliance monitor
85 be assigned to this project.
86

87 The Commission discussed the possible application of the Historic Code with Mr.
88 Catalano.
89

90 George Kefalas
91 Father of Applicant

92 Mr. Kefalas spoke in support of the project and urged the commission to find a solution
93 to restore the house.

94
95 Barry Gold
96 Ramona Ave.
97 Mr. Gold read a letter from the Preserve Sierra Madre Coalition.
98

99 William Kefalas
100 Mr. Kefalas stated that a portion of the approved demolition of the house has yet to be
101 started. He stated that he would like to hear from the City Building Official as to the
102 condition of the house.
103

104 Caroline Brown
105 Alta Vista Dr.
106 Ms. Brown spoke of prior historic renovation projects in the city.
107

108 Cheryl Galbraith
109 Mira Monte Ave.
110 Ms. Galbraith urged the Commission to not create further delays on this project.
111

112 Chair Frierman-Hunt requested that the City Attorney describe the demolition procedures
113 to the Commission. City Attorney Highsmith complied with the request.
114

115 Commissioner Desai asked to hear from the City Building Official.
116

117 Building Official Guerra provided a report from his site visit, which he stated had been his
118 second visit to the property. During both site visits he was not able to determine that the
119 structure in its present condition was an imminent hazard in need of immediate
120 demolition. He stated that he understood that the roof was to remain. He also stated that
121 he would have allowed the siding to be replaced, and would not have required demolition.
122

123 The Commission discussed the connection of the shear wall to the existing wood framing
124 with Building Official Guerra.
125

126 Roy Maliapar
127 Contractor
128 Mr. Maliapar spoke about the damage to the existing structure and the difficulty of
129 implementation of any of the preservation measures suggested by the Commission and
130 Building Official Guerra.
131

132 **Discussion**
133

134 Chair Frierman-Hunt clarified the Commission's purview, the options before them and the
135 task to be considered.
136

137 Commissioner Pevsner stated that he would be willing to take the owner at his word and
138 give him the benefit of the doubt. He felt that the structure could be repaired and could
139 allow for mitigation of the roof.

140
141 Commissioner Hutt stated that he felt righteous indignation at the sight of the story poles
142 of the house that previously existed. He felt that the process had been flouted, and
143 frustrated that the City does not have any better options than those provided in the code.
144 Commissioner Hutt stated that he would like to get an architectural historian to review the
145 project, and would be in favor of continuance to allow historic assessment.

146
147 Vice Chair Spears reviewed the house history and spoke about the responsibility of
148 ownership of an older home, as a steward of an element of the community. He expressed
149 frustration that this is the second meeting in a row where the Commission is backed into
150 a position of having to approve something that had already been done. Vice Chair Spears
151 felt that this applicant requires additional monitoring and would be in favor of requiring the
152 applicant to provide a historic assessment. He felt he would need more information before
153 proceeding.

154
155 Commission Desai felt that the Commission was put in a difficult position. He stated that
156 he is amenable to the roof removal but not any further demolition. Commissioner Desai
157 felt that there are remedies available to work with staff and find the best solution to
158 renovate, using the historic building code. He stated that he would not be in favor of
159 requiring a historic assessment as the house is essentially gone. He stated that he would
160 be in favor of a demolition permit required for the removal of the roof.

161
162 Chair Frierman-Hunt stated that she agrees with the Commission, mostly with Vice Chair
163 Spears. She stated that at this point a historic survey would be a moot point. She also
164 requested that the Commission review the demolition code to consider strengthening the
165 language of the code.

166
167 Commissioner Hutt feels that this project illustrated the need for a city-wide historic
168 survey, or at a minimum a review of the ordinance.

169
170 Vice Chair Spears inquired if compliance monitoring would be feasible and if it can be a
171 condition of approval. City Attorney Highsmith stated that this is a possibility. She stated
172 that cost for such service would normally be built into permit fees, but this could be done
173 at the expense of the applicant.

174
175 The Commission discussed the expectations of implementation of a compliance monitor.
176 The Commission also expressed desire to have the Building Official visit the site with the
177 city structural engineer and a member of staff. They discussed the feasibility of receiving
178 a report back from the inspection team in time to continue this matter to the next meeting.
179 Commissioner Hutt added that he felt that a historic survey report would also be helpful.
180 Director Gonzalez felt that might be difficult to achieve in that time frame.

181
182 Judy Webb Martin
183 Ms. Martin stated that a historic survey was prepared for this property as part of the sales
184 listing. She promised to get a copy to staff as soon as possible.

185

186 The Commission agreed by consensus to request a construction observation report of
187 the existing structure from a team consisting of Building Official Guerra, Structural
188 Engineer Tam, and Director Gonzalez. It was agreed that no decision would be made
189 until after that report had been received. The Commission stated they also would be
190 seeking some kind of historic documentation.

191
192 **Action: Vice Chair Spears moved to continue this matter to December 1, 2016.**
193 **Commissioner Desai seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

194
195 **2. MILLS ACT CONTRACT**
196 **Address: 101 West Bonita Avenue (Webster House)**
197 **Applicant: Mark and Kerri Abernathy**

198
199 Planning Manager Cardoso delivered the staff report.

200
201 The Commission inquired about the specifics of the Mills Act implementation on this
202 project, which staff clarified.

203
204 Mark Abernathy
205 Applicant

206 Mr. Abernathy provided the history of the house and this project.

207
208 Judy Webb Martin
209 Mira Monte Ave.

210 Ms. Martin spoke in favor of the project.

211
212 Brian Abernathy
213 Olive Tree Lane

214 Mr. Abernathy spoke in favor of the project.

215
216 Barbara Leigh Cline

217 Ms. Cline spoke in favor of the project.

218
219 **Action: Commissioner Hutt moved to approve Planning Commission Resolution**
220 **16-08, Commissioner Pevsner seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

221
222 **3. CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT 16-04 (CUP 16-04)**
223 **Address: 38 East Montecito Avenue, Units 1 and 2**
224 **Applicant: Kelly Rogers**

225
226 Planning Manager Cardoso delivered the staff report.

227
228 The Commission inquired about the calculation of the seating area as it relates to parking,
229 for which Planning Manager Cardoso provided clarification.

230
231 **Public Comment**

232
233 Kelly Rogers
234 Applicant
235 Mr. Rogers voiced a desire to join and become a part of the community. He also
236 requested to allow consumption of alcohol on the patio/game area.
237
238 The Commission inquired about the planned regulation of the patrons on the patio, which
239 Mr. Rogers provided.
240
241 Ryan Rogers
242 Applicant
243 Mr. Rogers reassured the Commissions about their concerns of the regulations of craft
244 breweries.
245
246 The Commission discussed the determination of the hours of operation, and their
247 authority to revise if necessary.
248
249 Michael Sharp
250 E. Montecito Ave.
251 Mr. Sharp spoke in favor of this project.
252
253 Dale Hutt
254 San Fernando Planning Commission
255 Mr. Hutt spoke in favor of this project.
256
257 Bill Derig
258 Orange Grove Ave.
259 Mr. Derig spoke in favor of this project.
260
261 Todd Tisdale
262 Pocock Brewery
263 Santa Clarita
264 Mr. Tisdale spoke in favor of this project.
265
266 Judy Webb Martin
267 Mira Monte Ave.
268 Ms. Martin spoke in favor of this project.
269
270 Michael Hill
271 E. Montecito business owner
272 Mr. Hill spoke in favor of this project.
273
274 Susan Wheeler
275 Grandview Ave.
276 Ms. Wheeler spoke in favor of this project.
277

278 Joe Hutchinson
279 Mariposa Ave.
280 Ms. Hutchinson spoke in favor of this project.

281
282 Luke Jones
283 Montecito Ave.
284 Mr. Jones spoke in favor of this project.

285
286 Barbara Leigh Cline
287 Grandview Ave.
288 Ms. Cline spoke in favor of this project.

289
290 **Discussion**

291
292 The Commission agreed by consensus to allow consumption of alcohol on the patio/game
293 area, and to correct condition #11 accordingly.

294
295 **Action: Commissioner Hutt moved to approve PC Resolution 16-10 as amended.**
296 **Commissioner Spears seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

297
298 **ORAL COMMUNICATION**

299
300 **Audience Comments**

301
302 None.

303
304 **Planning Commission**

305
306 Chair Frierman-Hunt requested to agendize discussion of the discretionary demolition
307 permit process.

308
309 **Planning & Community Preservation**

310
311 Director Gonzalez stated that the next Planning Commission meeting will be held on
312 November 17, 2016, at which time they will consider Municipal Code Text Amendments
313 for Group Living and Second Dwelling Units.

314
315 **Adjournment**

316
317 Chair Frierman-Hunt adjourned the Planning Commission meeting at 11:06 pm

318
319
320
321 _____
322 Secretary to the Planning Commission
Vincent Gonzalez, Director of Planning & Community Preservation