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CITY OF SIERRA MADRE
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
Regular Meeting of
Thursday, September 1, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.
City Council Chambers, 232 W. Sierra Madre Blvd.

CALL TO ORDER

Acting Chair Desai called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners Buckles, Desai, Hinton, Hutt, Pevsner,
Absent: Chair Frierman-Hunt, Vice Chair Spears
Staff: Vincent Gonzalez, Director of Planning & Community Preservation
Jonathan Perez, Assistant Planner
Jennifer Peterson, Administrative Analyst
Terri Highsmith, City Attorney

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Hutt moved to approve the agenda. Commissioner Hinton seconded.
Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JULY 7, 2016

Commissioner Hinton moved to approve the minutes. Commissioner Hutt seconded.
Motion carried unanimously.

AUDIENCE COMMENT

None.

PUBLIC HEARING

1. CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT 16-03 (CUP 16-03)
156 West Highland Avenue
Steve Salisian

Assistant Planner Perez delivered the Staff Report.

Director Gonzalez reminded the Commission that the project shall be considered as a new, not existing project. The new application is for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP 16-03) to allow a one-story, 693-square foot recreation building on the property located at 156 W. Highland Avenue. This building was originally constructed as a 1,322-square foot

fourth dwelling unit by the applicant without prior building and zoning approvals from the City. The new application modifies the building to conform to building setback requirements and alters the building to be used as an exercise/recreation room for the property. He also directed the attention of the Commission to a revised handout referencing the project summary.

Commissioner Hutt clarified the scope of the modification of the existing building. Commissioner Desai confirmed that staff has concerns of re-conversion to living space, and the requirement of a covenant to prevent such. Commissioner Desai also indicated that the building elevations should depict both the existing (as built) and proposed elevations.

Commissioner Hutt requested to include a clause in the covenant that City Code Enforcement has the right of annual inspection. City Attorney Highsmith stated that such statement is a normal inclusion.

Commissioner Buckles inquired if the project is not approved. Director Gonzalez stated that the applicant would have the right to appeal the project to City Council. If both reviewing bodies denied the project, the City will take action requiring the building to be demolished.

Commission Pevsner inquired about the parking requirement. Director Gonzalez stated that additional parking is not required for a recreation building.

Public Comment

Brent Cheney
Attorney for Applicant

Mr. Cheney thanked Staff and the Commission for their time. He provided a history and detail on the project and subject property.

The Commission clarified the ownership history, landscape options and water sources and usage.

Barbara Leigh Kline
Ms. Kline supported the requirement of the covenant.

Discussion

Commissioner Pevsner stated he is familiar with the project and gave some history on the project. He stated that he will defer to the rest of the Commission on the decision.

Commissioner Buckles felt that the project could be approved as submitted.

Commissioner Hinton feels that the revised submission is the same building with a different name. She stated that she would prefer a single story with an unfinished attic.

Commissioner Hinton requested that all plumbing be removed except for the ground floor bathroom. She also requested that the bathroom be reconfigured such that a shower could not be added. She also stated that she would be in favor of a covenant with annual inspections.

Commissioner Desai pointed out that a new project would have to comply with setback requirements and required distances between buildings. Director Gonzalez stated that the fire marshal had previously reviewed the project and will continue to address fire separation requirements during the plan check process.

Commissioner Hutt feels that this revision is a step in the right direction. He stated that he is in favor of a covenant, with an added condition of approval for a walkway between units to be installed and made of permeable pavers.

Commissioner Desai stated that he had some concerns due to the history of the project. He felt that nothing in the design prevents the conversion back to a dwelling unit. He stated that he would like to see the powder room relocated to the northwest corner of the building to prevent installation of a shower. Commissioner Desai also stated that he would be in favor of removal of all plumbing except for service to the first floor bathroom. He also stated that the proposed roofline is a defacto second story, even with the pull down ladder.

Commissioner Buckles stated that he would be amenable to removal of the second story floor. Commissioner Desai agreed that he would be amenable to a vaulted single story space.

Mr. Ferroq
Structural Engineer

Mr. Ferroq stated that removal of the floor of the second story would be unsafe.

Commissioner Desai suggested conversion to a balloon frame.

Mr. Ferroq stated that would be doable, but expensive.

The Commission and Mr. Ferroq discussed the feasibility of removal of the floor of the attic.

The Commission provided direction and conceptual ideas to the applicant.

Action: Commissioner Hutt moved to Continue this item to the October 20, 2016 Planning Commission meeting. Commissioner Pevsner seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION REGARDING REGULATION OF GROUP LIVING FACILITIES

Director Gonzalez delivered the Staff Report.

The Commission reviewed Chapter 17.08 – “Definitions”, as well as Chapter 17.60.030 – “Conditional Use Permits.”

The Commission directed staff to return at the September 15, 2016 meeting with the cited revisions and would review Exhibit “E” Chapter 17.94 – Group Living Facility Standards.

ORAL COMMUNICATION

Audience Comments

Barbara Leigh Kline

Ms. Kline thanked the Commission and staff for their hard work.

Planning Commission

None.

Planning & Community Preservation

Director Gonzalez stated that the next Planning Commission meeting would be held on September 15, 2016.

Adjournment

Acting Chair Desai adjourned the Planning Commission meeting at 9:33 pm



Secretary to the Planning Commission

Vincent Gonzalez, Director of Planning & Community Preservation