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**CITY OF SIERRA MADRE
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
Regular Meeting of
Thursday, May 3, 2018 at 7:00 p.m.
City Council Chambers, 232 W. Sierra Madre Blvd.**

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Spears called the meeting to order at 7:11 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Spears, Vice Chair Hutt, Commissioners Catalano, Desai, Denison,
Pevsner

Absent: Commissioner Frierman-Hunt

Staff: Vincent Gonzalez, Director of Planning and Community Preservation
Jennifer Peterson, Administrative Analyst
Jonathan Perez, Assistant Planner
Theresa Highsmith, City Attorney

REPORT OUT FROM CLOSED SESSION

City Attorney Highsmith reported that no action was taken.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Catalano moved to approve the agenda. Vice Chair Hutt seconded.
Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF APRIL 19, 2018

Vice Chair Hutt moved to approve the minutes. Commissioner Desai seconded. Motion
carried unanimously.

AUDIENCE COMMENTS

None.

PUBLIC HEARING

1. DESIGN REVIEW PERMIT & REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

Address: 350 Olive Tree Lane

Applicant Sabina Zenkich

46 Director Gonzalez introduced the item, and clarified the Commission's purview with
47 regard to the reasonable accommodation request.

48
49 Assistant Planner Perez delivered the Staff Report and Power Point Presentation.

50
51 Chair Spears clarified for the record the Commission's role/purview.

52
53 **AUDIENCE COMMENTS**

54
55 Dan Nugent
56 Applicant

57 Mr. Nugent introduced himself, thanked staff, provided background and intention for
58 proposed renovation.

59
60 Commissioner Catalano inquired about the applicant's vehicles, for the purpose of
61 evaluating the size of the garage doors.

62 The applicant stated that the garage doors will be standard size.

63
64 Commissioner Pevsner inquired about the previous addition.

65 The applicant stated that it was less than 400 square feet to enclose an existing
66 breezeway.

67
68 Commissioner Desai asked the applicant why they chose to place a detach garage in
69 the front of the property.

70 The applicant stated that it was best for both functionality and minimal impact on the
71 existing bedroom.

72
73 Sabina Zenkich
74 Applicant

75 Ms. Zenkich stated that the requirement of the additional 3 feet of garage width is the
76 need for reasonable accommodation.

77
78 **Public Comment**

79
80 Kris Kaul
81 Laurel Ave.

82 Ms. Kaul spoke about the accessibility of Olive Tree Ln. proposed addition, not
83 uncharacteristic of the neighborhood.

84 She also spoke in favor of the project.

85
86 Matt Buckles
87 E. Mira Monte

88 Mr. Buckles spoke in favor of the project.

89
90 Andy Edmonds
91 W. Highland Ave.

92 Mr. Edmonds spoke in favor of the project.

93
94 Carston Bell
95 330 Toyon Rd.

96 Mr. Bell spoke in favor of the project.

97
98 Jerry Friedenber
99 Olive Tree Ln.

100 Mr. Friedenber spoke in favor of the project.

101
102 David Sheen
103 198 W. Grand view

104 Mr. Sheen spoke in favor of the project.

105
106 **Discussion**

107
108 Commissioner Pevsner stated that he can make the findings but that he would prefer
109 not to have the garage encroach into the front prevailing setback.

110
111 Commissioner Desai stated that he appreciates the care that went into design, however
112 he found it difficult to make the finding for that this structure could not meet needs of
113 applicant and still meet the setback requirements.

114
115 Vice Chair Hutt stated that he has mixed feelings; he felt that the project does not meet
116 exceptional design requirement. He stated that he could understand why the proposal
117 is necessary and why it is situated where it is, given the reasonable accommodation.

118
119 Commissioner Denison agreed with Vice Chair Hutt & Commissioner Desai that there
120 was insufficient evidence to make the finding to allow encroachment into the setback.

121
122 Commissioner Catalano stated that he supports the garage in front, however he felt that
123 he could not find a compelling reason to allow encroachment.

124
125 Chair Spears stated that he felt that the proposed structure is unnecessarily large and
126 that he could not make the finding for exceptional design. He offered to give the
127 applicant the opportunity to respond to the Commission's comments.

128
129 Sabina Zenkich
130 Applicant

131 Ms. Zenkick stated that the proposed dimensions accommodate safe navigation and
132 that smaller openings would not be as safe.

133
134 The Commission offered suggestions of alternative configurations of the proposed
135 garage that would not require a variance.

136

137 City Attorney Highsmith reminded the Commission that accommodation is not a right
138 and does not entitle the applicant exactly what they are asking for; that the request
139 needs to be reasonable.

140
141 Commissioner Desai stated that architects deal with this type of issue all the time, and
142 that information exists to provide options.

143
144 Commissioner Denison stated that he agreed with Commissioner Desai, that there was
145 insufficient cause not to adhere to setback requirements.

146
147 Chair Spears stated that they are trying to offer options - story poles, continue to
148 redesign, suggest consulting an architect. He encouraged the applicant to consider a
149 continuance to do further research.

150
151 Vice Chair Hutt suggested that the applicant talk to staff and counsel about options, not
152 in a public hearing.

153
154 Director Gonzalez suggested continue to date certain to avoid the applicant having to
155 re-notice the project.

156
157 The Applicant stated that they preferred continuing to July 5th.

158
159 **ACTION: Vice Chair Hutt moved to continue this item to allow the applicant to**
160 **provide further information or redesign. Commissioner Catalano seconded.**
161 **Motion carried unanimously.**

162
163 **DISCUSSION**

164
165 **2. PLANNING ENTITLEMENT FLOWCHART**

166
167 Director Gonzalez delivered the Staff Report.

168
169 The Commission discussed the flowchart and the challenges of implementation.
170 They discussed the need for a joint session with City Council and a city-wide historic
171 survey

172
173 The Commission agreed by consensus that further direction from City Council is
174 needed.

175
176 **Oral Communication**

177
178 **Audience**

179 None.

180
181 **Planning Commission**
182

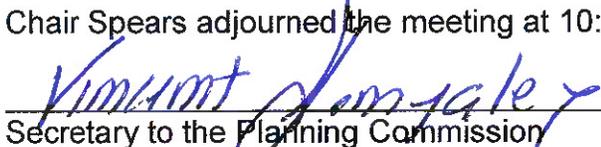
183 Vice Chair Hutt shared an update from the Commercial Code subcommittee.

184
185 Commissioner Catalano shared that he attended the L.A. Conservancy awards
186 luncheon and observed lots of interest in preservation and restoration.

187
188 **Staff**

189
190 Director Gonzalez stated that there are no cases for the next meeting, but could work
191 on the Commercial Zone update if he can get information from the Commercial Zone
192 Subcommittee.

193
194 Chair Spears adjourned the meeting at 10:23 p.m.

195
196 
197 Secretary to the Planning Commission
198 Vincent Gonzalez, Director of Planning & Community Preservation

