OFFICIAL MINUTES
MONTEREY PARK PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
AUGUST 11, 2015

The Planning Commission of the City of Monterey Park held a Regular Meeting of the Board in the Council Chambers, located at 320 West Newmark Avenue in the City of Monterey Park, Tuesday, August 11, 2015 at 7:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER:
Chairperson Garcia called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL:
Planner Tewasart called the roll:
Commissioners Present: Rodrigo Garcia, Ricky Choi, Larry Sullivan, Margaret Leung, Lincoln Lee
Commissioners Absent: None

ALSO PRESENT: Karl H. Berger, Assistant City Attorney, Michael A. Huntley, Director of Community and Economic Development, Samantha Tewasart, Senior Planner

ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:

None

AGENDA CHANGES AND ADOPTION:

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

None

PUBLIC HEARING:

None

OLD BUSINESS:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

2-A. TENTATIVE MAP NO. 073487 – 418 SOUTH RUSSELL AVENUE (TM-15-03)

The applicant, Frances Tran, seeks a Tentative Map to subdivide air right to establish and maintain a 2-unit condominium conversion project at 418 South Russell Avenue.

Planner Tewasart provided a brief summary of the staff report.

Commissioner Sullivan inquired rather these condominium units will be sold at market price. Planner Tewasart replied yes.

Chair Garcia opened public hearing.

Chair Garcia closed public hearing.

Commissioner Sullivan stated that there is a discrepancy between the architectural plan and site plan. Planner Tewasart stated that the architectural plan is accurate.

Action Taken: The Planning Commission after considering the evidence presented during the public hearing adopted **Resolution No. 14-15** approving Tentative Map No. 073487 (TM-15-03) to allow the subdivide air right to establish and maintain a 2-unit condominium conversion project at 418 South Russell Avenue in the R-2 (Medium Density Residential) Zone.

Resolution No. 14-15, entitled:
A RESOLUTION APPROVING TENTATIVE MAP NO. 073487 (TM-15-03) TO ALLOW THE SUBDIVISION OF AIR RIGHTS TO ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN A CONDOMINIUM CONVERSION PROJECT AT 418 SOUTH RUSSELL AVENUE.

Motion: Moved by Commissioner Lee and seconded by Commissioner Choi, motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners: Garcia, Choi, Lee, Leung, and Sullivan
Noes: Commissioners: None
Absent: Commissioners: None
Abstain: Commissioners: None

2-B TENTATIVE MAP NO. 073622 – 1585 SOMBRERO DRIVE (TM-15-04)

The applicant, Yaonan Duan, seek a Tentative Map to subdivide one lot into 9 lots at 1585 Sombrero Drive (“Project Site”).

Planner Tewasart provided a brief summary of the staff report.

Commissioner Lee inquired rather this is a gated community. Planner Tewasart replied yes.

Commissioner Leung asked if streetlights will be install on the new street. Planner Tewasart replied that it is required by public works to install streetlights.

Commissioner Choi asked if this property had always been vacant in the past. Planner Tewasart replied yes.

Chair Garcia inquired rather the staff had looked at the soil report for this project. Planner Tewasart replied that the public works staff is currently reviewing the geotechnical report.

Chair Garcia opened public hearing.

Applicant Representative, Hank Jong, stated that the applicant hired a licensed soil engineer to conduct the soil report and they will follow the condition stated in the report.

Commissioner Lee asked if section CC, with 3 tiers of retaining wall, has the worst soil condition on the site. Representative Jong replied yes and stated that this section will require the most retaining wall.

Commissioner Lee inquired about the height of the retaining walls. Representative Jong replied that the maximum height for the wall will be 6 feet. Commissioner Lee inquired about the total elevation of all 3 tiers of the wall. Representative Jong replied that the elevation difference from the lowest point to the highest point will be 18 feet.

Commissioner Lee asked how far apart each tier of retaining wall will be. Representative Jong replied that each tier of wall will be 3 to 5 feet apart. Commissioner Lee stated that the retaining walls are laterally supporting each other which mean the engineer is designing an 18 feet retaining wall. Representative Jong stated that the structural engineer will decide on how to group the retaining walls but maximum exposure for each tier of wall will be 6 feet in height.

Commissioner Lee asked what type of foundation is the soil report recommending. Representative Jong replied that the soil report recommend using caisson.

Commissioner Lee inquired if the soil engineer had studied the slope sustainability of this hill. Representative Jong replied that the soil report indicated the soil in this area is stable but it will require additional foundation and caisson for the development.

Commissioner Lee inquired rather the city has a soil engineer reviewing the geotechnical report. Director Huntley replied that the city contract out to AECOM to review the report.

Commissioner Lee inquired rather this project requires an EIR. Planner Tewasart replied that this project is categorically exempt.

Commissioner Lee asked which aspect of the project is being review by the Commission. Director Huntley replied that the Commission is responsible for reviewing the zoning aspect of the subdivision.

Commissioner Leung inquired about the drainage. Representative Jong stated that for the higher side of the lot water will collect in a catch basin and then diverted down the slope, and for the lower side of the lot water will be diverted to the street using piping. Commissioner Leung asked which street the water is draining to. Representative Jong replied that almost 100 percent of the drainage will go to Campanita Court.

Director Huntley stated that this project will need to meet the Low Impact Development Standards.

Chair Garcia inquired about the storm water mitigations. Representative Jong replied that the engineer will probably install a subsurface chamber on the down slope side.

Commissioner Sullivan inquired rather the design of the development will change depending on the result of the geotechnical report. Representative Jong stated that the outlook of the house will not change but the foundation might change base on the result of the geotechnical report.

Commissioner Sullivan inquired rather the result of the geotechnical report will increase the maximum height of the building. Representative Jong replied that the development will follow the City's height standard.

Commissioner Sullivan stated that he is concerned that the geotechnical report will alternate the design of the tentative map and the design of the development.

Commissioner Choi inquired about the landscaping design. Representative Jong stated that the project will follow the City's landscaping requirements.

Commissioner Sullivan asked where the water will be coming from for this project. Director Huntley stated that the water will be coming from Garvey and Sombrero.

Chair Garcia expressed the Commission's concerns about the geotechnical report. Director Huntley stated that the Commission can continue this item until the consultant is finish reviewing the geotechnical report.

Representative Jong stated that after reviewing the preliminary soil report, he believes that the site is stable for this development.

Chair Garcia inquired if the report shows any historic slippage plate. Representative Jong replied no but there is some surface erosion due to the long period of vacancy.

Chair Garcia inquired rather all the proposed houses will need caisson. Representative Jong replied that most downhill lots will require a minimum of 20 feet depth caisson into the bedrock.

Public Speaker:

Ron Hirosawa, as a resident, expressed his opposition to the proposed project. Resident Hirosawa stated that he would like to know the identity of the investors because he is concern that the investor will abandon the project. Resident Hirosawa stated that he also has concern about the stability of the soil, drainage, and the layout of the project.

Paul Isozaki, as a resident, also expressed his concern on the stability of the soil due to the history of the area.

Linda Yoshioka, as a resident, expressed her opposition to the proposed project. Resident Yoshioka stated that she is concern that this development will affect the condition of her house because she does not believe the soil is stable.

Project representative, Arnold Chen, presented a brief summary of the project.

Commissioner Lee inquired about the location of the soldier pile. Representative Chen stated that he is not sure. Representative Chen stated that he will need the recommendation of the civil engineer and structural engineer to decide where the soldier pile will be located.

Commissioner Lee inquired if the house is located on top of the soldiers pile. Representative Chen replied that he does not have the answer at this moment.

Commissioner Lee inquired about the type of the soil the building is sitting on. Representative Chen replied that some of the buildings are sitting on bedrock. Representative Chen stated that some of the bedrock are 3 to 5 feet below the surface and some are deeper.

Commissioner Leung inquired rather the original lot 8 has an existing 2-story house. Representative Chen replied that the lot is vacant. Representative Chen stated that there is a 2-story house on one of the parcel located on Campanita Court. He purchased it so this project can have a better access.

Commissioner Choi inquired if the existing 2-story house will remain. Representative Chen replied yes.

Commissioner Sullivan stated that he is still concern about the historical issue of the hillside and the potential damage this development might cause to surrounding properties.

Chair Garcia stated that he would like to see the result of the geotechnical report before making a decision.

Chair Garcia closed public hearing.

Commissioner Lee stated that the hill is sliding at this moment and he is concern about the risk if the developer abandons the project due to the economy.

Commissioner Leung stated that she would like to see some mitigation factors that will ensure the surrounding neighbors will have insurance if there are any damages due to the construction. Commissioner Leung stated that she would also like the applicant to create a construction timeline.

Chair Garcia inquired if the Commission can condition the applicant to ensure that compensation will be provide to the surrounding residents if this development create damages to surrounding properties. Attorney Berger stated that the Commission can make their decision based on the soil report and suggested to continue the item. Attorney Berger stated that the approval of the subdivision map should not endanger the health and public safety.

Commissioner Sullivan stated that he would like to protect the surrounding hillside residents from damages created by this development. Attorney Berger stated that if there is an issue between the applicant and surrounding residents, it will be a private matter.

Commissioner Sullivan inquired if the Commission can condition that the applicant cannot receive a final construction approval if there is any pending legal issue. Attorney Berger stated that the Commission cannot add additional standards for permit approval.

Commissioner Lee inquired if the Commission can have the applicant to obtain a grading bond. Attorney Berger stated that the grading bond is a standard requirement for a grading permit.

Commissioner Choi stated that he shared the same concern with the other Commissioners, and he would like the soil report to be reviewed first before bringing this item back to the Commission.

Chair Garcia stated that he would like to continue the item after the review of the geotechnical report.

Commissioner Sullivan inquired if there is an outreach for this project. Director Huntley stated that a subdivision project usually does not require a community outreach. Commissioner Sullivan inquired if the staff notified the surrounding residents about this development. Director Huntley replied yes.

Action Taken: The Planning Commission after considering the evidence presented during the public hearing **CONTINUED** Tentative Map No. 073622 to subdivide one lot into 9 lots at 1585 Sombrero Drive in the R-1 (Single-Family Residential) Zone to the meeting of October 13, 2015.

Motion: Moved by Commissioner Sullivan and seconded by Commissioner Choi, motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners: Garcia, Choi, Lee, Leung, and Sullivan
Noes: Commissioners: None
Absent: Commissioners: None
Abstain: Commissioners: None

ITEMS FROM COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

Director Huntley stated that the next Planning Commission on, August 25, 2015, will consist of the South Garfield Village Specific Plan.

Chair Garcia inquired if there is an update from the staff. Director Huntley provided a brief update on some project.

ITEMS FROM THE COMMISSION:

None

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business for consideration, the meeting was adjourned on August 11, 2015 at 8:30 p.m. to the next regular meeting on August 25, 2015 at 8:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

Michael A. Huntley
Director of Community and Economic Development