



CONVENE: Chair Brooke convened the Regular Meeting of the Monrovia Planning Commission on Wednesday, March 15, 2023, at 7:30 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, 415 South Ivy Avenue, Monrovia, California. In attendance were Community Development Director Craig Jimenez, Planning Division Manager Sheri Bermejo, Associate Planner Teresa Santilena, Administrative Assistant April Kea, and Assistant City Attorney Chelsea Straus.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Commissioner Cheryl Rose led the pledge of allegiance.

ROLL CALL: In attendance were Commissioners Scott Austin, Cheryl Rose, Gary Schaeffler, Bill Shieff, Aaron Stehura, Vice-Chair Michael Vachani, and Chair Darrell Brooke.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: It was moved by Vice-Chair Vachani, seconded by Commissioner Shieff to approve the minutes of the October 12, 2022 Regular Meeting and moved by Commissioner Shieff, seconded by Commissioner Austin to approve the minutes of the January 11, 2023 Special Meeting. The motions carried unanimously with a 7-0 vote.

PUBLIC INPUT:

1. Karen Suarez, Monrovia resident, expressed her desire for people to live sustainably and use drought-tolerant, California-native plants and trees in their development proposals. On behalf of the Monrovia Garden Club, she invited everyone to their meeting on May 23, 2023 and the Native Plant Sale on November 4, 2023. Karen also invited everyone to the South Pasadena Sustainability Fair Plant Swap on March 18, 2023.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

PH-1 Conditional Use Permit CUP2023-0001; 607 East Lemon Avenue, Eric Tsang Architects (Eric Tsang), Applicant

Associate Planner Teresa Santilena reviewed the staff report and answered questions of the Planning Commission regarding the Landscape and Tree Retention Plan condition of approval (Data Sheet 1, Condition No. 15), specifically whether existing trees will be retained and the number of new trees that will be added, whether the new units will be owner-occupied or rented, and whether the attached garage to the back unit will be used for both new units.

Chair Brooke opened the public hearing.

Public Input:

1. Eric Tsang, applicant, thanked staff for the time and effort spent in reviewing the proposal.
2. Karen Suarez, Monrovia resident, suggested more restrictions be put on the landscape plan.
3. Isaac Ramos, Monrovia resident, asked questions regarding construction, noise, and the proposed fencing materials.
4. Eric Tsang, applicant, noted that the owner is planning to begin construction in 4-6 months and the construction period should last 8-12 months. Eric also stated that decorative block would be used for the perimeter wall which would be placed on the property line, and the proposed units will be setback approximately 5 feet from the property line. Lastly, Eric

acknowledged he was in favor of incorporating California-native plants and trees into the landscape plan, as well as suggesting the use of rain barrels to the homeowner.

The Planning Commission discussed various aspects of the application and asked additional questions of staff regarding City construction timeframe restrictions and whether lawn was proposed in the recreation areas. Staff also provided general information about Low Impact Development (LID) requirements and indicated those would be incorporated into the plans during building plan check.

Chair Brooke closed the public hearing and recommended that Karen Suarez and Isaac Ramos, Monrovia residents, have ongoing meet and confer discussions with Eric Tsang, applicant.

Following discussion, it was moved by Commissioner Schaeffler, seconded by Commissioner Shieff, to approve CUP2023-0001 as presented. The motion carried unanimously with a 7-0 vote.

Community Development Director Jimenez stated for the record that the actions of the Planning Commission may be appealed to the City Council if filed in writing within ten days.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS: None.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR REPORT: Community Development Director Jimenez provided an update on the following:

- Project Updates
- Auto Repair Business Regulations

Neighborhood & Business Services Division Manager Justin Edson provided a brief overview of the City's intention to amend Title 5 of the City of Monrovia Municipal Code by adding operational standards and requirements for legal non-confirming auto repair businesses. Mr. Edson presented that these proposed regulations are meant to address business practices that have become nuisance conditions, such as:

- Working outside of enclosed structures;
- Long-term vehicle storage;
- The storage of vehicles on public streets; and
- The storage of equipment outdoors

The Planning Commission discussed with staff various aspects of the proposal, including:

- The possibility of grandfathering these auto repair businesses;
- The ability of these businesses to expand their operations;
- Challenges faced by surrounding cities with auto repair businesses;
- Staff's review of auto repair operational standards in surrounding cities as a reference;
- The impetus that prompted the City Council to propose operational requirements of legal non-confirming auto repair businesses;
- The applicability of this proposal to retail car dealerships;
- The ability of auto repair businesses to continue to operate under the projected set of regulations;
- Specific areas of the City that represent most of the complaints that are reported to Code Enforcement; and
- The impact of the proposed regulations on auto repair businesses' upgrades to machinery and technology within their current confinements

The Planning Commission also provided comments regarding:

- How this is a good discussion to have as the actions of legal non-conforming auto repair businesses is a common trend that needs addressing;
- Concern over negatively impacting existing auto repair businesses with new regulations; and
- The desire for the City to figure how to establish effective regulations that gain compliance instead of putting businesses out of operation

REPORTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM COMMISSIONERS:

- Chair Brooke encourage all to attend the Monrovia Area Partnership's 13th Annual Neighborhood Conference on Saturday, April 29, 2023.
- Chair Brooke thanked Monrovia resident Karen Suarez for bringing environmental sustainability to the Commission's attention.
- Commissioner Austin thanked staff for the inclusion of "alternatives to turf" in the landscape planning conditions, especially in the context of the continued drought.

ADJOURNMENT: Chair Brooke adjourned the meeting at 8:37 p.m.

APPROVED:

ATTEST:

Darrell Brooke, Chair
Monrovia Planning Commission

Craig Jimenez, AICP, Secretary
Monrovia Planning Commission