



CONVENE: Chair Brooke convened the Regular Meeting of the Monrovia Planning Commission on Wednesday, June 14, 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, Assistant Planner Vincent Gillespie, Planning Technician Brenda Quezada, Assistant City Attorney Carol Lynch, and Assistant City Attorney Chelsea Straus.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Commissioner Shieff 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 Commissioner Shieff, seconded by Commissioner Vachani to approve the minutes of the April 12, 2023 meeting. The motion carried unanimously with a 7-0 vote.

PUBLIC INPUT: None

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

**PH-1 Appeal APL2023-0001
303 Highland Place, Stephanie Meyer, Resident**

Assistant City Attorney Chelsea Straus asked that all Commissioners answer if they had any ex parte contacts or communications with anyone about the appeal and/or project prior to the hearing. Each Commissioner responded "no."

Planning Division Manager Sheri Bermejo reviewed the staff report and answered questions of the Planning Commission regarding whether plans were made publicly available, which specific application the appeal is concerning, whether the Planning Commission has the ability to change the approval of the first or second applications, whether the same determinations would have been made if all three applications were reviewed as one project, whether the appellant had the opportunity to view contextual renderings, whether the Development Review Committee meetings are televised, and whether the appellant received notice of the third application and had the opportunity to make comments.

Assistant City Attorney Carol Lynch and answered questions of the Planning Commission regarding Development Review Committee approvals and statute of limitations.

Chair Brooke opened the public hearing.

Public Input:

1. Stephanie Meyer, appellant, spoke about the following:
 - a. Her specific reasons for appealing, which include a lack of compliance with Monrovia Municipal Code §17.12.005(F)(3) and (4), the absence of appropriate plans, and a Brown Act violation;
 - b. Desired actions resulting from the appeal, which includes the submittal of contextual renderings and a remedy for the Brown Act violation;

- c. The three exhibits she presented to the Commission to demonstrate the project impact:
 1. Exhibit 1 - a picture of a two-story home at 265 Highland Place flanked by 8-9 single-story homes on the west side of Highland Place;
 2. Exhibit 2 – a marked-up picture portraying what the second-story addition could look like from her property; and
 3. Exhibit 3 - a picture showing the grade difference between the project site and her property;
- d. Her belief that staff discouraged her from appealing the second application.

The Committee asked questions of the appellant regarding the exhibits she submitted, her property's solar access, her concerns relating to the second application, and the building separation between the subject properties and estimated grade difference.

2. Edward Magluyan, Monrovia resident of 303 Highland Place and project applicant, spoke about his family's need for additional space, willingness to comply with all City codes, and adjustments made to the third set of plans in consideration of Stephanie Meyer's concerns. The applicant provided photos displaying the distance and number of trees separating the homes, and an aerial photo displaying comparable two-story homes in the neighborhood.

The Committee asked questions of the applicant regarding the estimated building separation, whether renderings of the second-story addition can be made available to the appellant, and how he would describe himself as a neighbor.

3. Stephanie Meyer, appellant, responded by noting the trees between the properties are deciduous. She stated that the neighbor never discussed their project with her. Lastly, she cited California Government Codes §54950 and §54953.

Chair Brooke closed the public hearing.

The Planning Commission discussed various aspects of the application and asked additional questions of the Assistant City Attorneys regarding the Planning Commission's ability to adjudicate the Brown Act violation claim. Assistant City Attorney Carol Lynch confirmed that the Commission's purview is limited to the review of the third application due to the lapsed time period in which a challenge to an alleged Brown Act violation may be adjudicated.

Planning Division Manager Sheri Bermejo expressed that the Planning staff did their best to keep the Planning Division's operation up and running during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Staff was working remotely, however, all regulations and procedures were followed as specified in the emergency orders. The education is never intended to persuade, but inform regarding the process and required fees.

Following discussion, it was moved by Commissioner Schaeffler, seconded by Commissioner Shieff, to deny APL2023-0001 and uphold the Planning Division Staff's decision regarding Neighborhood Compatibility Review DR2023-0006. The motion carried unanimously with a 7-0 vote.

**PH-2 Tentative Parcel Map TPM2023-0001
 Conditional Use Permit CUP2023-0006
 Minor Exception ME2023-0005
 872 West Walnut Avenue, Bowden Development, Inc. (Todd Bowden), Applicant**

Chair Brooke recused himself from the meeting agenda item as he had a conflict of interest. Chair Brooke appointed Commissioner Austin as Acting Chair.

Assistant Planner Vincent Gillespie reviewed the staff report and answered questions of the Planning Commission regarding the number of trees proposed in the landscape plan.

Acting Chair Austin opened the public hearing.

Public Input:

1. Todd Bowden, applicant, spoke about replacing the removed trees on the property and his willingness to increase the number of trees planted within reason. The applicant also answered questions of the Planning Commission regarding the use of alternatives to turf.

Acting Chair Austin closed the public hearing.

The Planning Commission discussed various aspects of the application and asked additional questions of staff regarding the possibility of editing the standard set of development conditions to incentivize the preservation of existing trees as they relate to future projects.

Following discussion, it was moved by Commissioner Shieff, seconded by Commissioner Stehura, to approve TPM2023-0001, CUP2023-0006, and ME2023-0005 with conditions. The motion carried unanimously with a 6-0 vote.

Chair Brooke rejoined the meeting.

**PH-3 Conditional Use Permit CUP2023-0005
General Plan Conformity GPC2023-0001
1235 Norumbega Drive (City Water Reservoir Site), Smart Link on behalf of AT&T
(Chris Doheny), Applicant**

Planning Division Manager Sheri Bermejo presented the staff report and answered questions of the Planning Commission regarding the no obstruction to access condition (Data Sheet 1, Condition No. 12), whether fire prevention measures were considered, and whether the generator runs continuously.

Chair Brooke opened the public hearing.

Public Input:

1. Chris Doheny, applicant, spoke about how the topography of the project location allows for the tower to blend well into the environment and answered questions of the Planning Commission regarding radiofrequency emissions, the availability of the tower for police and fire communications, and an expected date of operation.
2. Brian Yamaguchi, Monrovia resident, submitted a written comment in favor of the project noting the need for improved cell coverage in the area, which would assist in emergency situations, attract businesses, foster communication, and ensure that Monrovia remains competitive in a digitally connected world.

Chair Brooke closed the public hearing.

The Planning Commission discussed various aspects of the application and asked additional questions of staff regarding whether the brush in the area is Monrovia's responsibility or the Angeles National Forest's responsibility.

Following discussion, it was moved by Commissioner Austin, seconded by Commissioner Stehura, to approve CUP2023-0005 and GPC2023-0001 with conditions. The motion carried unanimously with a 7-0 vote.

**PH-4 General Plan Amendment GPA2023-0001
Zoning Amendment ZA2023-0001
Conditional Use Permit CUP2023-0003
Conditional Use Permit CUP2023-0004
508-512 South Ivy Avenue, Saxony Holdings, LLC (Jeff Godbold and Joshua Cain),
Applicant**

Community Development Director Craig Jimenez reviewed the staff report and answered questions of the Planning Commission regarding parking, the location of events, noise-related conditions, the number of special events that would be permitted per year, and potential residential use of the property as a backup option to hotel use.

Chair Brooke opened the public hearing.

Public Input:

1. Joshua Cain, applicant, spoke about the history of the subject property and his efforts towards the preservation of the homes on the property. The applicant also requested modifications for the purpose of reducing restrictions and allowing for the generation of revenue regarding the following draft planning conditions for Conditional Use Permit CUP2023-0003 (Historic Inn): #24a, #38, #41b, #42a, #42b, #42d.

The Committee asked questions of the applicant regarding whether amplified sound other than that of the voices of event officiants would be used, the earliest cut-off time for special events in order to mitigate noise disturbances, and the importance of the café hours to the applicant. The Committee also asked questions of the applicant regarding the number of people that would be able to be seated in the café, where dancing would take place during events, and the willingness of the applicant to accept the Conditions of Approval as they are and return to the Planning Commission if the applicant finds that the conditions are too restrictive.

2. Esther Feng, Monrovia resident, submitted a written comment in opposition of the project due to the current difficulty in driving through the alley south of the site. The resident has concerns that the proposed historic hotel use would impact the flow of traffic due to the possible increase in parked cars, making it even more difficult to drive through the alley.
3. Lily Meyer, Monrovia resident, submitted a written comment in opposition of the project due the use further reducing parking availability on Colorado Boulevard for residents. The resident also has concerns regarding the possible increase in noise and traffic due to the proposed coffee and alcohol sales.
4. Brian Yamaguchi, Monrovia resident, submitted a written comment in favor of the project due to the project preserving the City's history, honoring the memory of Steve Baker, and providing a unique and engaging experience for residents and visitors that would contribute to the City's economic vitality and cultural vibrancy.

Chair Brooke closed the public hearing.

The Planning Commission discussed various aspects of the application and asked additional questions of staff regarding whether the homes on the subject property would stay in place.

The Planning Commission made the following changes to the conditions of approval:

Data Sheet 1 (CUP2023-0003):

- Condition #24a was eliminated: “~~The use of the rear yard shall be limited to hotel guests.~~”
- Condition #24b was amended to read: “Hotel guest use of the rear yard shall be limited to ~~8:00~~ **10:00 AM** to ~~9:00~~ **8:00 PM** Sunday through **Saturday** ~~Thursday, and 8:00 AM to 10:00 PM on Friday and Saturday.~~ Before any change is made in these hours of operation, approval by the Development Review Committee (DRC) must be obtained. Alternatively, the DRC may refer the matter to the Planning Commission for its review, in which case no change in the hours of operation shall be made without Planning Commission approval.”
- Condition #41b was amended to read: “There shall be no limitation on the number of small general events with eight **25 people or less**. However, there shall not be more than one such event at a time.”
- Condition #41c was eliminated: “~~Large general events with more than eight people but no more than 25 people (or the maximum occupancy of the designated event space(s), whichever is less) shall be limited to one event per week. The applicant may request additional large general events through the Special Event process, which will not count toward the maximum number of Special Events.~~”
- Condition #41d was amended to read: “All **indoor** general events shall be limited to between the hours of 10 AM and ~~8~~ **10** PM, Sunday through **Saturday** ~~Thursday, and 10 AM and 10 PM, Friday and Saturday.~~ **All outdoor general events shall be limited to between the hours of 10 AM and 8 PM, Sunday through Saturday.**”
- Condition #42a was amended to read: “Outdoor events. Any event to be held outside shall require a Special Event Permit. Events shall not be held in the rear yard or designated onsite parking areas.”
- Condition #42b was amended to read: “~~No more than four (4) outside special events shall be permitted within a calendar year.~~ **The Development Review Committee (DRC) shall review the use after the first four (4) special events.**”
- Condition #42d was amended to read: “~~No Sound amplification is~~ **shall be** permitted **between the hours of 10 AM and 8 PM, Sunday through Saturday.**”
- Condition #42e was amended to read: “**Indoor** events shall be limited to the hours of between 10 AM and ~~8~~ **10** PM, Sunday through **Saturday** ~~Thursday, and 10 AM and 10 PM, Friday and Saturday.~~ **All outdoor events shall be limited to between the hours of 10 AM and 8 PM, Sunday through Saturday.**”
- Condition #38 was amended to read: “A café shall be permitted to operate in the public areas (kitchen, sitting room and parlor) of 512 South Ivy Avenue. The café hours of operation for the general public shall be between the hours of 9:00 AM and ~~7:00~~ **8:00** PM **outdoors and 9:00 AM and 10:00 PM indoors**, daily. Registered guests of the inn may use the sitting room and parlor at all times.”
- Condition #57 was added to read: “The Applicant shall, within 30 days after approval by the Planning Commission, submit to the Community Development Department his/her written consent to all of the conditions of approval contained in this Data Sheet Number 1. The Conditional Use Permit 2023-0003 shall be void and of no force or effect unless such written consent is submitted to the City within the 30 day period.”

Following discussion, it was moved by Commissioner Schaeffler, seconded by Commissioner Shieff, to adopt Planning Commission Resolution No. PCR2023-0002 and Recommend approval of GPA2023-2023-0001, ZA2023-0001, CUP2023-0003, and CUP2023-0004 to the City Council with the amended conditions. 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:

- Reorganization

Following discussion, it was moved by Commissioner Shieff, seconded by Commissioner Schaeffler to elect Vice-Chair Vachani as Chair and Commissioner Stehura as Vice-Chair for the 2023-2024 fiscal year. The motion carried unanimously with a 7-0 vote.

REPORTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM COMMISSIONERS:

- Chair Brooke thanked the Commission for his time as Chair.
- Commissioner Austin expressed his gratitude towards staff for their work done during the All-American City Competition.

ADJOURNMENT: Chair Brooke adjourned the meeting at 11:40 p.m.

APPROVED:

ATTEST:

Michael Vachani, Chair
Monrovia Planning Commission

Craig Jimenez, AICP, Secretary
Monrovia Planning Commission