



CONVENE: Chair Vachani convened the Regular Meeting of the Monrovia Planning Commission on Wednesday, April 10, 2024, at 7:30 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, 415 South Ivy Avenue, Monrovia, California. In attendance were Community Development Director Craig Jimenez, Deputy Director of Community Development Sheri Bermejo, Assistant Planner Vincent Gillespie, Assistant City Attorney Chelsea Straus, and Administrative Assistant April Kea.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Commissioner Shieff led the pledge of allegiance.

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: It was moved by Commissioner Stehura, seconded by Commissioner Austin, to approve the minutes of the February 14, 2024 regular meeting. The motion carried with a 5-0 vote with Commissioners Brooke and Rose abstaining due to both having been excused from the February 14, 2024 regular meeting.

PUBLIC INPUT: None

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

**PH-1 General Plan Amendment GPA2022-0001 (Planning Commission Resolution PCR2024-0002), Zoning Amendment ZA2022-0002 / Ordinance No. 2024-05 (Planning Commission Resolution PCR2024-0003), Hillside Development Permit HDP2022-0002, Neighborhood Compatibility Design Review DR2022-0009, Minor Exception ME2022-0008, and Mitigated Negative Declaration (Planning Commission Resolution PCR2024-0001)
545 Norumbega Drive (APN: 8523-002-045), Group Atom Development (Miguel Uribe), Applicant**

Deputy Director of Community Development Sheri Bermejo and Assistant Planner Vincent Gillespie reviewed the staff report and answered questions of the Planning Commission regarding:

- whether the recommendations included in the 2020 Geotechnical Analysis are still appropriate given the age of the document;
- how neighboring residents would be protected from construction impacts relating to noise, safety, and air quality;
- whether the geotechnical recommendations outlined in the report will be enforced by conditions of approval;
- the types of permitted uses in the P/QP (Public/Quasi Public) zone versus the RF (Residential Foothill) zone;
- whether the P/QP zone allows for private development proposals;
- the City's limitation on construction hours and noise;
- the potential for reporting noise disturbances on the weekends and holidays; and
- whether future development plans exist on the City-owned property north of the project site.

Chair Vachani opened the public hearing.

Public Input:

1. Ron Pelham, Monrovia resident, distributed two newspaper articles to the Commission; a 1980 KFWB News 98 editorial titled "We are Fragile," and a 1980 Duarte Correspondent article titled "The Rain's Gone, Not the Problems." In addition, he expressed his opposition and spoke about the following:
 - a. his past effort to prevent further denuding of the Sawpit Debris Basin;
 - b. how he bought his property to distance himself from development;
 - c. the number of homes in the Hollywood Hills that have fallen off of graded hillside lots;
 - d. impacts to the oak trees;
 - e. the potential for landslides; and
 - f. the potential for this project to create a precedent for other future projects.
2. George Hills, Monrovia resident, stated his opposition and asked questions regarding how the maintenance of the opaque windows and retaining walls will be enforced.
3. Gary Potter, Monrovia resident, recommended that traffic and parking impacts should be addressed.
4. Carolyn Contreras, Monrovia resident, expressed concerns regarding impacts to wildlife.
5. Curt Brown, Monrovia resident, thanked the applicant and staff for addressing his privacy impacts and expressed concerns about the size.
6. Bobbette Biddulph, SWCA Environmental Consultants, stated the following in response to comments:
 - a. the traffic-related disruptions were studied and determined to be low based on the City's transportation impact guidelines;
 - b. the most traffic disruption would take place during the four-week grading period when two to four hauling trips would occur daily; and
 - c. a traffic management plan is required as a mitigation measure to maintain safe ingress and egress of vehicles in the neighborhood.
7. Miguel Uribe, applicant, responded that he is building this home for his brother and sister-in-law.

Chair Vachani closed the public hearing.

The Planning Commission discussed various aspects of the application and asked additional questions of staff regarding:

- whether the City was involved in the initial sale of Los Angeles County Flood Control District's property; and
- whether the first buyer was familiar with the zoning designation at purchase.

Community Development Director Craig Jimenez and Deputy Director Sheri Bermejo clarified that the proposed project does not set a precedent for additional zone changes in the area because the majority of the vacant properties in the area are owned by the City and zoned HWP (Hillside Wilderness Preserve) or HR (Hillside Recreation).

In response to comments received during public input, Deputy Director Sheri Bermejo highlighted that Condition of Approval #26 on Data Sheet 1 requires a covenant to be recorded against the property for the maintenance of vegetation, drainage features, and the retention of the opaque

windows. It was also noted that Condition of Approval #3 on Data Sheet 1 requires Development Review Committee (DRC) approval if the opaque windows are ever changed out.

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

Data Sheet 1 (HDP2022-0002, DR2022-0009, and ME2022-0008):

- Condition #14 was amended to read: “~~Evergreen~~ **Fire-resistant California native** shrubs shall be planted adjacent to the wrought iron fence to provide increased privacy to the property located to the southwest of the project site (524 Norumbega Road), subject to review and approval by the Planning Division.”

Following discussion, it was moved by Commissioner Schaeffler, seconded by Commissioner Austin, to adopt Planning Commission Resolution Nos. PCR2024-0001, PCR2024-0002, and PCR2024-0003 and recommend approval of GPA2022-0001, ZA2022-0002, HDP2022-0002, DR2022-0009, ME2022-0008, to the Planning Commission with the amended conditions. The motion carried unanimously with a 7-0 vote.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS: None

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR REPORT:

- Annual Progress Report of the General Plan:

Deputy Director of Community Development Sheri Bermejo reported on the Annual Progress Report of the General Plan and answered questions of the Planning Commission regarding Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) production goals and the City’s progress on collecting rental rate information.

- New Development Update:

Community Development Director Jimenez reported on the following:

- Community Development Department staffing updates;
- the TownePlace Suites hotel soft-opening scheduled on April 11, 2024;
- the status of the entitlement applications for the 701 South Myrtle Avenue and Oak Park projects; and
- the 14th Annual Monrovia Area Partnership (MAP) Neighborhood Conference scheduled on Saturday, April 27, 2024 at Second Baptist Church.

Community Development Director Jimenez answered questions of the Planning Commission regarding the status of the parking lot improvements at 102 South Myrtle Avenue, specifically if the project included a landscape plan and if all of the trees have been planted.

REPORTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM COMMISSIONERS: None

ADJOURNMENT: Chair Vachani adjourned the meeting at 9:09 p.m.

APPROVED:

ATTEST:

Michael Vachani, Chair
Monrovia Planning Commission

Craig Jimenez, AICP, Secretary
Monrovia Planning Commission