



SAN GABRIEL DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

Agenda

Regular Meeting
Monday, January 26, 2009
7:00p.m.

City Hall, 425 South Mission Drive
Conference Room A (Upstairs)

CALL TO ORDER:

RAYMOND CHENG, CHAIRMAN

ROLL CALL OF COMMISSIONERS:

**CHAIRMAN CHENG, VICE CHAIR NAKABA,
COMMISSIONER THAI,**

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC (on items not on this agenda)

Pursuant to Government Code Section 54954.3, this is the time approved for members of the public to address the Design Review Commission on matters of interest that are within the jurisdiction of the Design Review Commission of the City of San Gabriel. The Commission cannot take action on such comments, but may place an item on a future agenda for discussion.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. **Minutes from the regular meeting on December 22, 2008**

NEW BUSINESS

1. **1527 Abbot Avenue**

Applicant/Designer: Vincent Tsoi (SLS Design)
Case No. PL-08-089

Project Summary: This project is a Precise Plan of Design request to construct a ten (10) unit attached and detached residential condominium development on a 23,067 sq. ft. (0.53 acre) lot. The project will have units ranging from 1,235 to 1,549 square feet of dwelling space, each with attached two-car garages. The proposed project is located in the R-3 (Multiple-Family Residence) zone.

Environmental (CEQA) Status: The project was reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). A Notice of Proposed Negative Declaration of

Environmental Impact was prepared and filed with the Los Angeles County Clerk on October 16, 2008. The document is also available for review.

Staff Recommendation: Approval with Conditions

Report prepared by Grace Song, Associate Planner

COMMENTS BY STAFF:

1. **Conditions of Approval-** This is a staff update regarding the Commissioners' request to incorporate a statement at the beginning of each meeting identifying conditions of approval as a legal document.

Report prepared by Larissa De La Cruz, Assistant Planner

2. **Strengthening the Staff Letter noting the Conditions of Approval-** This is a staff update regarding the Commissioners request to strengthen approval letter to be revised to give greater emphasis to the conditions

Report prepared by Carol D. Barrett, Planning Manager

3. **Parliamentary Procedure and Roberts Rules of Order-** This is an informational item to assist the Commission with becoming familiar with the rules of conducting a meeting. There is no staff report for this item.

COMMENTS BY COMMISSIONERS:

ADJOURNMENT:

TO A REGULAR MEETING ON MONDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2009 AT 7 PM, AT CITY HALL, CONFERENCE ROOM A, 425 S. MISSION DRIVE.

NOTES:

REVIEW OF MATERIALS PRIOR TO THE MEETING:

Staff reports, project drawings, and other materials related to the projects on this agenda are available for public inspection in the Planning Division Office, San Gabriel City Hall, 425 South Mission Drive, during regular business hours, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, and 8:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Tuesdays; telephone (626) 308-2806.

ACCESSIBILITY AND AUDITORY ASSISTANCE:

City Hall is accessible to the disabled. Upon request, this agenda will be made available in appropriate alternative formats to persons with disabilities, as required by Section 202 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Any person with a disability who requires a modification or accommodation in order to participate in a meeting should direct such request to the Community Development Department at 626-308-2806 at least 48 hours before the meeting, if possible.

APPEALS:

Any decision may be appealed by any interested party to the City Council within ten (10) business days by filing a letter of appeal with the City Clerk and paying the appeal fee of \$790. No appeal may be filed more than ten (10) business days after a decision.

I declare under penalty of perjury that I am employed by the City of San Gabriel in the Community Development Department; and that I posted this notice at City Hall, Fire Department Headquarters, and at the US Post Office on Wednesday, January 21, 2008.

Date

Larissa De La Cruz, Assistant Planner

**CITY OF SAN GABRIEL
DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION**

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, DECEMBER 22, 2008
7:00 P.M.**

CALL TO ORDER: Vice Chair Cheng called the regular meeting of the Design Review Commission to order at 7:00 p.m.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Vice Chair Cheng, Commissioner Nakaba and Commissioner Thai

At this time, Vice Chair Cheng welcomed the new Commissioners. Vice Chair Cheng explained the procedure of the meetings to the new Commissioners and the public.

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Planning Manager Carol D. Barrett, City Planner Mark Gallatin, Assistant Planner Larissa De La Cruz, Consulting Landscape Architect Gregory Clark, and Consulting Architect David Agnew

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:

None.

NEW BUSINESS

2. **801 S. San Gabriel Blvd**
Applicant/Designer: Kai Chen, KC Design, INC
Case No. PL-08-106
Precise Plan of Design
Staff Recommendation: Approval with Conditions

The applicant is renovating an existing building. The renovation includes the reduction from 14,000 to 9,999 square feet, a change in use from a furniture retail store to a medical center, a façade remodel and interior tenant improvement, parking lot restriping and landscaping enhancements. The project is located in the Commercial and Limited Light Manufacturing(C-3) zone.

Assistant Planner Larissa De La Cruz presented the request or approval of a Precise Plan of Design for an extensive renovation to an existing building. She said that the renovation included the reduction from a 14,000 to 9,999 square feet and a change in use from a furniture retail store to a medical service. She also mentioned that the project involved a façade remodel, interior tenant improvements, parking lot restriping and landscaping enhancements. Assistant Planner De La Cruz stated that the property is located on the southwest corner of San Gabriel Blvd. and Pearl St, is surrounded by commercial uses and is located within the city's Redevelopment area and is zoned Commercial and Limited Light Manufacturing (C-3).

Assistant Planner De La Cruz mentioned that research on the history of building permits for the property showed that the use for the building has changed over time and that the building does not meet current parking requirements. She said that the applicant is proposing to reduce the size of the building to accommodate the need for parking. Additionally, the San Gabriel Municipal Code requires that medical buildings 10,000 and above require a Conditional Use Permit and therefore the applicant chose to reduce the building size to 9,999 in order to avoid the need for a

Conditional Use Permit. Assistant Planner De La Cruz said that the proposed renovation will replace what was previously a furniture store and change the use to a dialysis center.

Assistant Planner De La Cruz stated that the parking requirement for this project is met and that the project is providing 41 parking spaces where 38 are required. She also said that signage for the building will be simple and will be placed along the north and east elevations of the building and will use reverse halo channel letters. Assistant Planner De La Cruz said that there is a non conforming roof top sign that will be removed in order to meet the requirements of the San Gabriel Municipal Code. Alterations to the building will eliminate its non conforming status and will trigger the need to remove the sign.

Assistant Planner De La Cruz asked Consultant David Agnew to comment on the architecture portion of the project.

Mr. Agnew said that he reviewed the initial project and suggested that additional window treatment and color choice be selected and he said that the applicant had addressed the issue. He also said that the parkway was bland with regards to landscaping. He mentioned that the building is symmetrical and that it will be a nice project overall with the changes that were made in response to his suggestions..

Assistant Planner De La Cruz asked Consultant Gregory Clark to comment on the landscaping portion of the project.

Mr. Clark said that the some of the comments on the staff report did not reflect the newest plans. He said that there were recent changes made to the plans that were submitted to him. He said that during the last review it was agreed that the curb cut on the San Gabriel Blvd side would slightly move to the north to be able to get five feet of planter space to the south of the building and he said that the new plan showed this change. Mr. Clark said that his main concern was that the project was not meeting the municipal code standards and that there was not enough screening being proposed for the parking lot and that he was also concerned with the mix of plant material. He said that hydro zoning would be a good solution. He indicated that the planters on the street should provide screening to the parking lot. Mr. Clark said that he was concerned with the vines on the west side of the property because they would need to be heavily pruned and damaged when the new landscaping is installed and he said that the applicant had addressed that concern on the newest plan submittal by replacing the vines with a planter that would also serve as a buffer to the adjacent residential property. Mr. Clark mentioned that trees were recommended for shading of the parking lot and that the trees as proposed may not be suitable and may not provide sufficient shading. He also said that there was a concern with the irrigation because the water uses for the plant selection were different than what would work with the irrigation. He also said that the plant palette should be consistent throughout the plan. Mr. Clark said that he was uneasy with the landscaping around the transformer. He said that the landscaping should be reworked to address the maneuverability to the transformer so that maintenance of the transformer can occur without the landscaping being damaged. Mr. Clark said that the irrigation is not designed for the space around the transformer. He said that he had requested that the trees should be maintained under a different type of irrigation to a deep root watering system. He also said that he recommended head to head coverage for irrigation throughout the site. Mr. Clark stated that there is a plan check checklist that he will review once the project goes in to plan check and he said that the applicant had already received a copy. This concluded Mr. Clark's report.

Assistant Planner De La Cruz continued with the staff report and said that the project is exempt from the requirements of CEQA. She said that the project meets the findings for a Precise Plan of Design and recommended that the Design Review Commission approve Planning Case PL-08-106 with conditions.

Planning Manager Carol Barrett asked if the conditions of approval changed after the most recent submittal of the landscape plan. Assistant Planner De La Cruz confirmed that they had not changed.

Commissioner Nakaba asked if a drip system of irrigation was required. Mr. Clark said that it was not required but that it was encouraged. Commissioner Nakaba also asked about the driveway on Pearl St. He asked if another tree could be installed adjacent to the driveway. Mr. Clark said that there may be a power pole obstructing the way of a new tree but that it may possible.

Vice Chair Cheng asked if the Commission had any other questions for staff and Commissioner Nakaba asked about who would do the work for the street trees. Mr. Clark clarified that the owner would do the construction.

Vice Chair Cheng opened up the public portion of the meeting.

Kai Chan with KC Design Architects (1539 Sawtelle Blvd. #2 Los Angeles, CA 90025) said that the project would provide a dialysis center in the area. He said that the owner would be happy to comply with the requirements although there was a budget concern. He said that the landscape architect for the project was not available at the time and that he was available for questions.

Commissioner Nakaba asked about the addition of another street tree. Mr. Chan said that he would speak to the owner regarding the issue. Commissioner Nakaba asked if the structural soils were a requirement and Mr. Clark confirmed that it was not a requirement. Commissioner Nakaba said that it would not seem appropriate with this project. He also asked for clarification as to who would install the street trees. Mr. Chan said that they would install the trees.

Vice Chair Cheng asked about the canopy at the west side of the building. Mr. Chan said that the canopy would be existing steel beams that would be exposed. Vice Chair Cheng asked if signage was being reviewed as well and Assistant Planner De La Cruz confirmed that it was. Vice Chair Cheng asked for the color of the signage. Assistant Planner De La Cruz said that the applicant was proposing what was on the rendering. Mr. Chan said that he would have a sign company provide additional information regarding the sign. *Vice Chair Cheng suggested that the sign program be reviewed during a different meeting.*

Vice Chair Cheng also asked about if the parking lot was being repaved. Mr. Chan confirmed that new asphalt would be laid down.

Vice Chair Cheng asked Mr. Chan to go over the design of the building and the color scheme. Mr. Chan reviewed the color board with the Commission. He said that the plaster will be used for the majority of the building. He said that the accents would be the 7/8 plaster with a smooth finish and will be painted Sherwin Williams 7680 and 0014. He said that the window frames would be a dark color and will have a bronze color glazing. Mr. Chan also said that the storefront frames would be aluminum.

Vice Chair Cheng said the he did not have any other questions. He said that staff should conduct site visits during construction to ensure that the right colors are applied to the building. Vice Chair Cheng closed the public portion at this time.

Commissioner Thai said that the Commission had addressed most of his concerns.

Commissioner Nakaba said that it was a nice project and that he did not have any comments beyond requesting the additional tree..

Vice Chair Cheng said that the signage must go back to the DRC for review and that the applicant shall work with the city's Landscape Consultant on the outstanding landscaping issues.

At this time Vice Chair Cheng asked that the Commission entertain a motion. Commissioner Nakaba made a motion to approve the project with the additional tree and with the conditions recommended by staff. Commissioner Thai seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

3. 1906-1908 Strathmore Ave.

Applicant/Property Owner: Nora Hsueh

Case No. PL-08-137

Amendment to Precise Plan of Design to modify the height and materials of patio walls.

Staff Recommendation: Approval with Conditions

City Planner Mark Gallatin presented his report. He said that this was an amendment to a Precise Plan of Design approved in 2003 for two apartment buildings. He said that each of the units had a private patio and that each patio was enclosed with a 3 foot tall masonry wall. He said that staff was out conducting an inspection and realized that the

patios had been modified and raised to six feet with pink precision block. City Planner Gallatin stated that the applicant has provided photos of the modification as well as the proposed submittal which shows a cultured stone veneer. He also mentioned that the new heights for two of the units are in violation of setback requirements. He said that only four feet would be allowed for the front two units. City Planner Gallatin said that staff added a condition of approval to the project that would eliminate the cap at the top of the existing wall as well as reduce the height of the walls for the first two units. He said that the other units would be able to keep the six foot tall walls. Lastly City Planner Gallatin said that the applicant shall comply with all of the conditions of approval from the first approval, the cap shall be removed from the top of the existing wall, and that all alterations shall be completed within 30 days of the approval.

Commissioner Nakaba asked if the alteration to the wall was structurally connected. The applicant Jensen Shai, (1286 Oakland Ave, Arcadia, CA) confirmed that it was structurally anchored to the existing wall.

Commissioner Nakaba asked if there was a walkway adjacent to the patios. City Planner Gallatin confirmed that there was. Commissioner Thai asked if there was a perimeter block wall and City Planner Gallatin confirmed that there was a block wall.

Vice Chair Cheng asked the applicant if he had a problem with the conditions of approval. Mr. Shai asked if he could have a different material other than the stone veneer. Vice Chair Cheng said that when the building was approved, it was approved a certain way and that changes to the design are reviewed by the Commission and that the recommended finish is the stone veneer. The owner of the building, Nora asked about the 30 day timeframe and asked if she could get an extension. City Planner Gallatin said that because this was a code enforcement case, the 30 days were made a part of the conditions of approval. The Commission said that they would compromise and that the allowed timeframe would be 45 days and that if additional time was needed, a maximum of 30 days would be allowed and the applicant shall work with staff.

At this time Vice Chair Cheng entertained a motion to accept the application. Commissioner Nakaba made the motion to approve Planning Case PL-08-137 with conditions and Commissioner Thai seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

COMMENTS BY STAFF:

Welcoming of New Commissioners:- Assistant Planner De La Cruz welcomed the new Commissioners to the Design Review Commission and all of the Commissioners introduced themselves and talked about their backgrounds.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

Vice Chair Cheng described the roles of the Commission and indicated that there is a Chairman and a Vice Chair and that they each serve for one year. He asked the Commissioners for their nomination and Commissioner Nakaba nominated Vice Chair Cheng as the Chairman and Commissioner Thai seconded the motion. Vice Chair Cheng elected Commissioner Nakaba as the Vice Chair of the Commission. The election of officers was completed.

COMMENTS BY COMMISSIONERS:

Vice Chair Cheng stated that there was still a concern with applicants and their understanding of the conditions of approval. He asked that staff revisit on the issue of incorporating a clause at the beginning of each meeting describing that the conditions of approval are a legally binding document.

Commissioner Nakaba asked if applicants are made aware of this importance of the conditions of approval when applications are approved. City Planner Gallatin said that staff sends an approval letter that includes the conditions and that the letter states appeal rights. Planning Manager Barrett said that staff would look into strengthening the approval letters to address this issue.

Vice Chair Cheng asked if there were any additional comments from the staff or the Commission.

Assistant Planner De La Cruz asked for clarification from the Commission regarding the wording for the clause on

conditions of approval and asked if the Commission wanted it back on the agenda for review. Vice Chair Cheng said yes.

At this time, Vice Chair Cheng wished everyone a Happy New Year.

Vice Chair Cheng adjourned the meeting at 8:15 p.m. to the regular January 26, 2009 Design Review Commission meeting.

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The complete text of the Design Review Commission meeting minutes is available on tape and may be reviewed in the Community Development Department office at City Hall during regular business hours.

Raymond Cheng
Vice Chair of the Design Review Commission

ATTEST:-----
Larissa De La Cruz, Assistant Planner
San Gabriel Design Review Commission