



CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date: January 22, 2009
To: Honorable Mayor & City Council
From: Jonathan Lait, City Planner
Subject: Consideration of Design Review Commission Request to Extend Mandatory Design Review to Hillside and Trousdale areas, and Transfer Discretionary Approval Authority from the Planning Commission to Design Review Commission

Attachments: None.

INTRODUCTION

This report provides a framework for the City Council to discuss direction to staff regarding Design Review Commission's requests to expand design review to all single family homes and changes to the Commission's discretionary review authority.

DISCUSSION

At a recent Mayor's Cabinet meeting, a request was made to advance two design review-related policy initiatives. These policy efforts include extending mandatory design review of single family homes from the Central area to the Hillside and Trousdale areas. The second request is to transfer certain single family discretionary applications (Minor Accommodations), currently reviewed by the Planning Commission, to the Design Review Commission.

The Design Review Commission has led an effort to have these changes implemented in the City's Zoning Code. In addition to its own frequent discussions, representatives from the Design Review Commission met with the Planning Commission several months ago to refine the details of the second request described above.

Over the past year, the Planning Division has been focused on processing project applications, worked on several major development projects, and continues to advance the City's effort on the General Plan and Sustainability Master Plan. In addition, the Division, along with Building and Safety, recently completed its return move back to City Hall and is implementing changes to the way it processes and administers applications and engages the public and the Permit Center.

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At present, the two policy efforts identified in this report are not being actively pursued. The Planning staff's advanced policy team would undertake this effort and is currently working on the General Plan and Sustainability Master Plan. Recently this team completed two ordinances dealing with nonconforming land uses and parking requirements, and the soon to be adopted elevator projection ordinance. Other policy initiatives tasked to the Advanced Planning team include work on the in-lieu parking fee program, development impact fee study, hotel and transient occupancy study, and upcoming work on the zoning ordinance update, including the Entertainment Business District.

It is anticipated that the Sustainability Master Plan will be completed by March 2009. Also around that time, staff will present to the City Council options and a recommendation on how to proceed with the General Plan effort. Depending on the City Council's direction, progress on some of the other policy efforts identified in this report may be delayed.

Staff understands that the Chair from the City's Design Review Commission will be present at the study session to further discuss this request.

FISCAL IMPACT

The recommendation in this report does not have any significant budget or fiscal impacts.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the City Council provide direction to staff on whether to proceed with the requested design-related text amendments and input generally on the land use policy work program.



Anne Browning-McIntosh, AICP
Community Development Director