

**CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS
DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION MEETING
455 North Rexford Drive, Beverly Hills, CA 90210
City Council Chambers
Commission Meeting Room 280-A**

**Thursday, February 4, 2010
1:00 p.m.**

MINUTES

Bus Tour: No Bus Tour
Formal Meeting: 1:00 p.m.

OPEN MEETING

ROLL CALL AT 1:10 PM

Commissioners Present: M. Weiss, G. Gilbar, H. Szabo, Vice Chair S. Strauss, and Chair H. Gabbay.

Commissioners Absent: None.

Staff Present: D. Jerex, I. Nguyen, and C. Bond (Community Development).

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE AUDIENCE: None
Members of the public may address the Commission

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE COMMISSION:

Chair's Report from Mayor's Cabinet Meeting

- Chair Gabbay reported that the Fine Arts Commission is currently considering an ethnic art statue proposal within the City.
- It was noted that the Architectural Commission and DRC Chairs expressed concerns to the mayor that they wish to have the case planner present his or her own cases at the meetings.
- Use of handicap parking spaces being used in the City is being investigated.
- In 2014, Beverly Hills is planning to have a float in Rose Parade.

- Commissioner Weiss suggested having security systems professional speak to the Commission to discuss security options other than fencing and will work with staff to secure the speaker.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES:

1. Consideration of the minutes of the January 7, 2010 meeting.

ACTION:

Moved by Vice Chair Strauss and seconded by Commissioner Szabo.

That the minutes of the January 7, 2010 meeting be approved as presented.

AYES: Commissioners Szabo, Weiss, Gilbar, Vice Chair Strauss and Chair Gabbay.

NOES: None.

CARRIED.

NEW BUSINESS

CONSENT CALENDAR

2. **218 North Palm Drive (PL 092 2048)**

A request for an R-1 Design Review Permit to allow a new two-story single-family residence, located in the Central Area of the City, south of Santa Monica Boulevard at **218 North Palm Drive.**

Senior Planner Jerex presented the case on behalf of Senior Planner Naziri. It was noted in the staff report that the conditions to be met included:

1. Decrease the number of pear trees from 16 to 9 trees.
2. Increase pear trees in size from 15 to 24 or 36 inch boxes.
3. Pear trees shall be planted 7 to 8 feet apart for proper growth allowance.
4. Submit a landscape plan with renderings to show fully grown vegetation.

ACTION:

Moved by Vice Chair Strauss and seconded by Commissioner Weiss.

That the resolution conditionally approving the R-1 Design Review Permit be approved as presented with the landscape plans and renderings, showing fully grown vegetation, to be returned to staff.

AYES: Commissioners Szabo, Weiss, Gilbar, Vice Chair Strauss and Chair Gabbay.

NOES: None.

CARRIED.

CONTINUED CASES

3. **602 Trenton Drive (PL 100 1452)**

A request for an R-1 Design Review Permit to allow window and door revisions to a previously approved two-story single-family residence, located in the Central Area of the City, north of Santa Monica Boulevard at 602 Trenton Drive.

Senior Planner Jerex presented the case on behalf of Associate Planner Gohlich. The project was originally approved with wood for the windows and doors. The Applicant proposed changing out windows and doors from wood to metal clad, in like color. The front door will not change from the original proposal and is not a part of the proposed changes.

Speakers for this item were Applicant/Contractor Sean Farahmand and homeowners Arman and Natasha Hekmati. The Contractor, Mr. Farahmand, explained that the new materials would result in more durability and lower maintenance.

Commissioner Gilbar agreed and noted that clad windows are substantial and costly, but over the long term made more sense. Vice Chair Strauss and Commissioner Weiss also agreed with the Owner's reasoning. It was also noted that the color would remain the same. Commissioner Szabo agreed, but pointed out that returning to the Commission was a costly way for an applicant to receive approval for revisions. Senior Planner Jerex requested that staff be able to approve future revisions provided the materials are quality in order to save the applicant time and money.

Chair Gabbay confirmed that if the quality of materials was very high, then staff would be able to approve the changes. If the materials were questionable, then it should return to the Commission for review.

ACTION:

Moved by Commissioner Weiss and seconded by Vice Chair Strauss.

That staff will make a notation within the plans, file, and permits to allow for wood windows and French doors to be replaced with quality clad material. The front entryway door shall remain as originally proposed and that a new resolution is not required.

AYES: Commissioners Szabo, Weiss, Gilbar, Vice Chair Strauss and Chair Gabbay.

NOES: None.

CARRIED.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

4. **512 North Maple Drive (PL 100 0872)**

A request for an R-1 Design Review Permit to allow a new two-story single-family residence, located in the Central Area of the City, north of Santa Monica Boulevard at **512 North Maple Drive.**

Assistant Planner Nguyen presented the staff report stating that the existing one story home would be demolished to construct a new two story home with basement. The façade exhibited heavy ornate elements and it was questioned if further modulation would be appropriate for the design. She requested further direction from the Commission.

Commissioner Weiss pointed out that there was no garage proposed at the rear of the property; only a concrete pad. She suggested that the applicant consider constructing a more permanent parking structure instead of the concrete pad.

Albert Mikaelian, of Architecture West, Inc., was in attendance to speak on this item.

Mr. Mikaelian provided a brief description on the project. He stated that the roof was multi-colored; gutters were copper; windows were wood with a dark stain. He stated that he would go back to the homeowners and suggest a two car garage. He then offered that many neighbors have come forth stating they loved the design.

Commissioner Weiss stated that the porte cochere and front entryway was heavy and not appropriate for the residence, and suggested it be simplified.

Commissioner Szabo said the Tuscan style of architecture maximizes square footage and this was a nice attempt at that. He liked the element above the entry and the two arched windows with the round element in the middle. He also liked the pergola over the doors on the side of the entry with vines. He liked the fact that there was some modulation on the side. He suggested there was a more elegant, refined way of presenting the entry way as it appeared to be too heavy. The quoins on the corner of the house do not lend to the style and the boxy, flat horizontal element between the first and second floor seemed too simple. The bottom of both balconies on the second floor could be further refined. Additionally, the porte cochere is flat and wide which made it look too heavy.

Vice Chair Strauss agreed that the quoins crowded the front façade of the building. The entrance way was too heavy and she felt unsure about the trellis. Additionally, she requested that the applicant reconsider the landscape plan with the suggestion of adding several trees within the front yard.

Commissioner Gilbar suggested that the arch of the porte cochere be increased as the arch appears too flat. Additionally, he suggested that the moulding surrounding the door be widened and commended the façade's modulation.

Chair Gabbay noted that the entrance of the front entryway was too heavy for the façade. He suggested keeping the quoins a consistent size, or to eliminate them. He stated that the single door on the second floor would be better suited with double doors.

He noted that the distance between the corbels and top of the doors on the second floor should be widened. Additionally, the applicant should re-examine the height of the chimney flutes and gate at the ground floor, as it appears to be too tall.

ACTION:

That the project be returned to the meeting of March 4, 2010, by Order of the Chair.

5. 265 South Wetherly Drive (PL 100 0935)

A request for an R-1 Design Review Permit to allow a new two-story single-family residence located in the Central Area of the City, south of Santa Monica Boulevard at **265 South Wetherly Drive.**

Senior Planner Jerex presented the staff report on behalf of Assistant Planner Rojemann. She explained that a few planners did have discussions with the owners and the designer about the style and how the Commission generally felt about this type of style; particularly the entry, the columns, the ornate details; and heaviness of the balustrades.

Senior Planner Jerex said that Assistant Planner Nguyen put together a booklet of some of the Power Point presentations that track projects from beginning to end. It shows iterations and progress made for the past couple years. It would demonstrate to applicants at the counter how the process starts out, proceeds and then shows the final rendering. She pointed out that staff could provide more assistance to applicants showing more examples and nothing says it better than renderings and approved projects and the steps they have gone through to get to the end product. She further explained that this could help speed up the process. The Power Point presentations have been printed out in color. These would show direct and factual documentation of how the process works. Commissioner Weiss requested that it be placed on a future.

Architect Shahriar Yadegari and Mazin Ibrahim spoke on behalf of the owners on this item. Mr. Yadegari said that they reviewed other architectural designs on the internet, but the client said it was their dream house and specified the elements she wanted included. The massiveness of the columns goes with the style and the homeowner loves this. He hoped that the commission would consider her selections. He explained that marble was to be used on the first floor. It would be painted similar to "Venetian" plaster to look like marble; the same with the balustrades. The walkway would be ceramic tile. The design of the doors at the entrance was a custom design. The material would be iron and a sample was provided. Mr. Yadegari further explained that the front elevation showed no fences in front, but that gates were proposed.

Chair Gabbay stated that the commission was guided by the five criteria and those criteria must be followed in order to take any action and for any comments to be made about a project. He read the criteria and explained to the applicant what was necessary for approval of a project. The Chair advised the applicants that these decisions were not personal, but again based on previously established criteria that the commission must follow.

Commissioner Weiss stated that she understood a woman's desire to make her home a special place and it was not her intention to make this personal, but the Commission's actions are limited by the findings that need to be made for a project. She stated that the

Applicant was taking down an attractive, small home, on a lot smaller than the average sized lot in the City, and building a large home. She stated that the proposed residence is out of scale and she could not make the compatibility finding to approve the project. The footprint of the house could remain the same, but the applicant should design a house that is compatible and in scale with itself and the neighborhood and felt the project needed to be re-studied.

Chair Gabbay suggested that they should try to eliminate as many columns as possible, simplify the wrought iron railing, eliminate the balustrades, and create a sense of unity. He then noted that they had five different types of designs all in one house and the design was not internally cohesive.

Commissioner Szabo noted that if the applicant removed the ornate features on the façade, then what would result is a box with windows and doors. He clarified that it was not of pure architectural style and that the Commission could not do what the Applicant wanted. He told them they needed to go back to the drawing board and pick a style; to look at the five design criteria and the style guide. If they were convinced that was what they wanted, then they had the right to appeal the Commission's decision within 14 days. He advised that the project should go back to be re-studied. The Commissioner further noted that tweaking would cost a great deal of money, time and emotion.

Vice Chair Strauss pointed out that there may be houses that look like what the Applicant wanted, but those were houses built before this commission was formed.

Commissioner Gilbar said that the facade was over embellished and there was virtually no modulation. It was a box with overly ornate columns, balustrades like a public library and was not appropriate with the small lot. The proportions were not elegant.

ACTION:

That the project be returned to the meeting of March 4, 2010, by Order of the Chair.

Chair Gabbay recused himself. The gavel was passed to Vice Chair Strauss.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

- Director's Report / Good and Welfare
- April 2010 Meeting Date (April 8, 2010 needs to be rescheduled)
It was decided the April meeting would take place on April 1, 2010.
- 264 South Rodeo Drive: City Council Appeal Call-Up
- Discussion of Potential Consolidation of Design Review & Architectural Commissions
This issue was presented at the last cabinet meeting. The Chair of the Architectural Commission and Design Review Commissions both strongly objected to the revisiting of this idea. It was suggested keeping a united front by demonstrating the good results having come from Design Review Commission's decisions. Commissioner Weiss pointed out that others have reported they had a better end result on their projects due to the direction of the Design Review Commission.

THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 3:50 PM

PASSED AND APPROVED THIS 4TH DAY OF MARCH 2010.

Hamid Gabbay, Chair

Submitted by Donna Jerex, Secretary

