



ARCADIA PLANNING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2021

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**CALL TO ORDER** Chair Wilander called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chamber.

She welcomed Commissioner Tsoi to the Planning Commission and then informed the public of a call-in number that was established for public comments.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**ROLL CALL**

PRESENT: Chair Wilander  
PRESENT (Via telephone): Vice Chair Lin, Chan, Thompson, and Tsoi  
ABSENT: None

**SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION FROM STAFF REGARDING AGENDA ITEMS**

Planning & Community Development Administrator Lisa Flores had no supplemental information.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS (5 minute time limit per person)**

There were none.

**PUBLIC HEARING – CONTINUED ITEM**

1. **Resolution No. 2071** – Continuation of Multiple Family Architectural Design Review No. MFADR 19-04 and Tentative Parcel Map No. TPM 20-03 (83113), with a Categorical Exemption under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for a three-unit, multi-family residential condominium development at 147 Alice Street

**Recommendation:** Approve and Adopt Resolution No. 2071

**Applicant:** Tom Li of Prestige Design, Planning & Development, on behalf of the Property Owner, Soliel Homes, Inc.

Chair Wilander introduced the item and turned it over to Senior Planner Luis Torrico to present the staff report.

Mr. Torrico presented the staff report and informed the Planning Commission that this item was continued from the January 26, 2021 meeting. Following the discussion at the January 26 meeting, Staff and the Applicant, each have proposed a change to the site plan to help improve maneuverability on site. The list of conditions of approval was updated to reflect two new conditions. A total of five (5) videos were provided with the staff report demonstrating a vehicle ingressing/egressing from the garages and guest parking spaces..

Chair Wilander reminded the Commissioners that the public hearing was closed at the January 26, 2021 meeting, therefore a motion would be required to re-open the public hearing to enable the Applicant or the public to provide further comments.

There was one (1) caller on the line who provided a public comment at the last meeting.

There was no motions to re-open the public hearing.

## **DISCUSSION**

Commissioner Thompson referenced the staff report with regard to the commonality of 18 x 19-foot garages in multifamily developments; while garages of this size may be common in Arcadia, they are not common in the greater San Gabriel Valley, and are one of the smallest in the competitive market area. He provided justification as to why the current project should be taken on its own merits. He then referenced the Multifamily Design Guidelines which specify that an applicant should not assume that a project that meets the minimum zoning standards and regulations will be approved, and the Development Code as it pertains to permit precedence and burden of proof. He read the conclusions of a traffic engineer who used computer modeling and found the garage parking spaces lack functionality. Additionally, the City's parking regulations state that parking should operate effective and efficiently, which the proposed spaces do not appear to do so. The maneuverability into and out of the garages will be worsened if there is a second car already parked in the garages; it is difficult to get the full picture from the videos without seeing another car parked in the garage or in the guest parking space. Lastly, the Code allows lots of this size to be developed with two (2) units; A two-unit proposal would improve functionality and allow for proper vehicular ingress and egress.

Vice Chair Lin stated that he appreciated Commissioner Thompson's efforts and understands the concerns about functionality; however, in cases such as this the market will dictate the outcome. If the parking is truly nonfunctional, a buyer would be averse to purchasing the unit or request concessions from the seller. Reasonableness and practicality can be assessed different ways and accepting outside expert reports from those other than Staff or the Applicant may not be appropriate. In the past he has supported increasing the width of parking spaces but he would not be in favor of determining practicality this way. He would be inclined to approve the project with the new proposed changes.

Commissioner Chan asked if the Applicant was in agreement with the proposed changes to the Resolution? And were other designs considered?

Mr. Torrico confirmed that the Applicant was in support of the two (2) changes. There were no other designs considered.

Commissioner Tsoi viewed the last meeting when the project was originally presented. He understands the various perspectives of the Commissioners and Commissioner Thompson's concerns. He acknowledged that each project is different and if designed properly, maneuverability can be accomplished. He also agreed with Vice Chair Lin that the housing market will dictate the outcome. Developers purchase a lot such as this with the anticipation of building three (3) units, whereas two (2) may become too expensive to market. He was supportive of the Code changes with regard to minimum density which encourages more but smaller units. The parking while not ideal, is the standard set in the Code. Similar to open space requirements, there is a difference between what may be encouraged versus what is required by Code. He had no issues with the project and the proposed changes increase the maneuverability on site.

Commissioner Chan stated that if prospective buyers have issues with a development, then the consequences are borne by the developer/applicant and the market will dictate the success of the project. He was wary of making decisions based upon the analysis of outside experts because they can vary from expert to expert and Staff is ultimately responsible for providing the analysis. He agrees that projects should be reviewed independently, and he visited many sites prior to the Planning Commission meetings

to assess the situation. This project will enhance the area and bring in new additional housing, therefore he would be in favor of approval. He recommended that a wheel stop be placed on the block wall which is adjacent to the driveway isle.

Chair Wilander was grateful for the video demonstration provided by Staff and the Applicant, although it appears as though the car entering the garages encroaches into the second parking space. Also, a tenant/owner of a four-bedroom unit will likely have multiple cars and both of these factors could contribute to on-street parking. Although she still had concerns with the functionality of the parking, with the added modifications to the site plan as proposed, she would be inclined to approve the project. She added that it is appropriate for the Planning Commission to evaluate projects on a case-by-case basis and bring forward independent research to the Commission as necessary.

## **MOTION**

It was moved by Vice Chair Lin, seconded by Commissioner Tsoi to adopt Resolution No. 2071, approving Multiple Family Architectural Design Review No. MFADR 19-04 and Tentative Parcel Map No. TPM 20-03 (83113), with a Categorical Exemption under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for a three-unit, multi-family residential condominium development at 147 Alice Street

## **ROLL CALL**

AYES: Chair Wilander, Vice Chair Lin, Chan, and Tsoi  
NOES: Thompson  
ABSENT: None

The motion carried on a 4–1 vote, with Commissioner Thompson dissenting.

## **CONSENT CALENDAR**

2. Minutes of the January 26, 2021 Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission

**Recommendation:** Approve

It was moved by Vice Chair Lin, seconded by Commissioner Chan to approve the minutes of the January 26, 2021 Planning Commission Regular Meeting.

## **ROLL CALL**

AYES: Chair Wilander, Vice Chair Lin, Chan, Thompson, and Tsoi  
NOES: None  
ABSENT: None

## **MATTERS FROM CITY COUNCIL LIAISON**

City Council Liaison Cheng wished the Planning Commission a Happy New Year. He welcomed Commissioner Tsoi and thanked him for his service. He complimented the Commission and staff on their efforts. Lastly, he invited the Commissioners to the “Meet Your Area Commander” event.

## **MATTERS FROM THE PLANNING COMMISSONERS**

Chair Wilander welcomed Commissioner Tsoi and asked him to introduce himself.

Commissioner Tsoi stated that he has been an architect for over 30 years, and his architectural firm is located in South Pasadena. He has been an Arcadia resident for over 20 years and has previously served on the Design Review Board for the City of Monterey Park. He is honored to serve on the Planning Commission.

Upon request from Commissioner Chan, Ms. Flores updated the Commissioners on the upcoming Planning Commissioners Academy. Once the registration is open, she will send the information to the Commissioners and see who would be interested in attending.

**MATTERS FROM ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY**

Assistant City Attorney Maurer welcomed Commissioner Tsoi and introduced himself.

**MATTERS FROM STAFF INCLUDING UPCOMING AGENDA ITEMS**

Ms. Flores announced that there is one (1) item scheduled for the February 23, 2021 meeting: a series of text amendments to the Development Code. The format for the February 23 meeting will be Zoom.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The Planning Commission adjourned the meeting at 7:50 p.m. to Tuesday, February 23, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. in the City Council Chamber for the next virtual meeting.



Marilynne Wilander  
Chair, Planning Commission

ATTEST:

  
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Lisa Flores  
Secretary, Planning Commission