

THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF LA HABRA
February 24, 2025

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Manley called the Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of La Habra to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chamber.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: LED BY VICE CHAIR MAHECHA

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: MANLEY
MAHECHA
CARDENAS
RAMSLAND

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: NONE

OTHERS PRESENT: DIRECTOR: KIM
CITY ATTORNEY: ROBERTO
SENIOR PLANNER: SYED
CONTRACT PLANNER: TAYLOR
SECRETARY: LOPEZ

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Manley asked if there was anyone in the audience that wished to address the Commission on the consent calendar or any item not listed on the agenda. There were none.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Secretary Lopez explained the Consent Calendar procedures. Chair Manley asked if any of the Commissioners wished to remove an item. There were none. He then asked if there was anyone in the audience that wished to remove an item. There were none.

Moved by Vice Chair Mahecha, seconded by Commissioner Cardenas, to approve the Consent Calendar. Motion passed 4-0.

1. PROCEDURAL WAIVER: Waive reading in full of resolutions and ordinances and approval and adoption of same by reading title only.
2. Approval of the Planning Commission Minutes of February 10, 2025.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. DULY NOTICED PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER REQUESTS FOR: (1) LOT LINE ADJUSTMENT (LLA) 24-0002 TO RELOCATE AN EXISTING LOT LINE IN ORDER TO ESTABLISH A 1.59 ACRE LOT; AND (2) PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT (PUD) 24-0001 TO CONSTRUCT 21 DWELLINGS UNITS (APARTMENT HOMES) INCLUDING TWO AFFORDABLE UNITS FOR RENT TO MODERATE-INCOME

HOUSEHOLDS ON SAID 1.59 ACRE LOT. THE PROJECT INCLUDES THE PROPERTIES CURRENTLY ADDRESSED AS 900-970 WEST LA HABRA BOULEVARD (ASSESSOR'S PARCEL NUMBERS 298-121-01, 298-011-21 AND 298-011-22).

Chair Manley asked if any correspondence had been received with regard to the item. Secretary Lopez said no.

Contract Planner, Darryl Taylor, presented the staff report.

Chair Manley asked if any of the Commissioners had any questions.

Commissioner Ramsland asked if there would be a manager living onsite or if they would have a management company. Contract Planner Taylor said it will be managed by a company but one has not been chosen yet. The company will make a recommendation whether or not to have someone on site.

Vice Chair Mahecha said that for-sale units have CCRs (Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions) which place parking restrictions on the future residents and wondered if there would be something similar for these rental properties. Mr. Taylor said the Applicant has proposed that the property management company have a system to manage the onsite parking. They will have parking permit stickers and visitors will be provided with a temporary parking sticker. Mr. Taylor repeated that they meet the required parking per code, providing 63 onsite parking spaces. Vice Chair Mahecha asked for clarification on the portion of the land that will remain in the R-1 zone. Mr. Taylor explained that that portion of land will be used to meet building setback requirements and includes a sewer easement that prevents the construction of dwelling units within this area, located to the north of the site.

Chair Manley asked if there are currently three or four parcels. Mr. Taylor said there are four parcels and explained that with lot line adjustments, they can not create new additional parcels so in the end there will be four parcels. He then explained how two lots would be combined, one would remain unchanged and one would be split to create the parcel where the new units are proposed. Chair Manley then spoke about the front setback measurements. Mr. Taylor explained that the required front setback of 15 feet will be met if measured from building to building. He explained that the proposed four-unit building will have a 10-foot setback from the westerly property line, considered the front setback for this development, and that the existing single-unit dwelling adjacent to the project on the west has a five foot side setback, resulting in a total building to building separation of 15 feet. Mr. Taylor explained the Applicant will also be planting trees to provide more privacy.

Chair Manley opened the public hearing and invited the Applicant to address the Commission and asked if there was anyone else wishing to speak in favor of the project.

The Applicant, Douglas Woodward, a consultant for the Diocese of Orange, addressed the Commission. Mr. Woodward thanked Staff for their work on the staff report. He explained that the Diocese has began a process of reviewing properties they own, across the county, that are underutilized and finding ways to create some value to support the churches and parishioners. The project in La Habra is the first of those type of projects. The Diocese and the parish will continue to own the property and it will be managed professionally by a management company. Cleaning up that area that is used by unhoused individuals and giving

21 families a place to live in the City is a great positive outcome. Two of the units will be offered to families of moderate-level income. Another benefit to the neighborhood is a new cul-de-sac with a concrete band in the paving to make it visibly clear that it is a cul-de-sac and that vehicles and/or maintenance trucks can use it as a turn around.

Father William Goldin, the parochial administrator for Our Lady Of Guadalupe Church (OLG), addressed the Commission. Father Goldin said that OLG has been a part of the community since 1947 and they plan to be part of the City for many years to come. The proposed project will provide funding to support the church and its good charitable works and it will provide 21 families with a beautiful place to call home. Father Goldin concluded by saying they are in support of this project.

Scott Miller, resident at 1171 Citrus Drive, who works on outreach for OLG, addressed the Commission. Mr. Miller said that this proposed project is a win-win. Converting a decades old blighted piece of land into apartment living similar to what is available in the City of Brea is good for La Habra.

There being no others to speak in favor of the project, Chair Manly asked if there was anyone wishing to speak in opposition of the project.

Lisa Cota, resident at 341 S. Marian Street, addressed the Commission. Ms. Cota opposes the project, saying there is no more room for an additional 64 vehicles coming up and down Marian Street. She explained that currently only one car at a time can drive up or down the street, making it virtually a one-way street. Ms. Cota said it's even worse on Sundays or on nights when OLG has special events as church-goers park on Marian Street. She expressed concerns for emergency vehicle access, saying it would be impossible for them to get through with the added traffic. She said adding more traffic to this already narrow street is not feasible.

Bonnie Chavez, resident at 140 N. Marian Street, addressed the Commission. Ms. Chavez questioned why there was no mention of an Environmental Impact Report or traffic study for the project. She also expressed concerns for the increase in traffic, referencing the recent deadly traffic accidents that have taken the lives of La Habra High School students. Ms. Chavez said that the street sweeper isn't able to clean North Marian Street due to parked vehicles that are not cited and asked if it would be possible to require parking permits for North Marian Street.

Joshua Der, resident at 981 Walker Avenue, addressed the Commission. Mr. Der said he is not in opposition of new housing but does have some concerns. Mr. Der said that not all residents who will be affected were notified as they live beyond the 300-foot radius used for noticing the project. Mr. Der explained that street parking is currently very limited. Like Ms. Cota said, if there are vehicles parked on both sides of Marina Street, only one vehicle at a time can get by. He said that adding additional vehicles will increase the existing traffic caused by OLG. Mr. Der said the 151 forecasted daily trips, per the staff report, is very low and felt concerned that a traffic report was not needed. Mr. Der asked why the project wouldn't have access to exit to the northwest onto Third Avenue, which would give the residents of the project access to both Walker and Third, helping to ease traffic off of Walker and the southern part of Marian Street. Mr. Der asked, for the safety of the kids who live in the neighborhood, if

they could install an island or speed bumps to slow down vehicles coming in and out of the new development. Mr. Der wondered if a street sweeper would go through the proposed development.

Sylvia Pietri, resident at 241 S. Marian Street, addressed the Commission. Ms. Pietri echoed the traffic concerns that exist especially on Sundays, due to OLG vehicles, and said adding more vehicles will make the situation more difficult. Ms. Pietri is concerned that with added traffic, emergency vehicles will have a tougher time responding to emergencies. She recounted an incident when she was unable to make it to her driveway because an emergency vehicle, responding to an emergency, was blocking the street, and she has an 88 year old grandma at home that needed attention. Ms. Pietri said they already have cars speeding down the street since there are no speed bumps and felt that adding more vehicles will only add to the safety concerns for the children and pets who live there. She also mentioned that there is no traffic signal off of La Habra Boulevard, just a flashing pedestrian cross walk, which no one stops for and expressed safety concerns. Ms. Pietri concluded by asking why didn't the development have access onto Monte Vista Street.

Peter Urquides, resident at 311 S. Marian Street, addressed the Commission. Mr. Urquides said he is opposed to the project for all the reasons that others have already mentioned. He expressed flooding concerns with the runoff of rain water from OLG onto the proposed property, saying the proposed project is in a flood plain. Mr. Urquides also expressed concerns with the condition of the soil and said they would need to make extra improvements to maintain stable structures.

Guillermo Palacio, resident at 1000 W. La Habra Boulevard, addressed the Commission. Mr. Palacio said the Church doesn't have enough parking for their parishioners. People will park illegally on the street, there is no traffic control, and there have been near misses for those who use the crosswalk on La Habra Boulevard. He said he didn't understand how they could re-parcel the land without a traffic assessment on the Church. Mr. Palacio wondered if they would conduct a traffic study if the Church decides to run the school again, to review the lack of parking for both the school and the church.

Jesse Perez, resident at 110 S. Marian Street, addressed the Commission. Mr. Perez said while new housing is good, the problem is there is not another entrance into Marian Street. He said there is always an issue with entering and exiting when the Church has services or events and adding more vehicles will just add to the problem. Mr. Perez said there is already no room for parking on Marian and wondered where the visitors would park their vehicles. He said they will park on Marian, adding to the congestion and safety concerns of limited emergency vehicle access.

Jose Flores, resident at 960 Walker Avenue, addressed the Commission. Mr. Flores said he moved to that neighborhood so his child could attend school at OLG. He feels the cul-de-sac is a safe neighborhood and thanked his neighbors for showing up and speaking up. Mr. Flores raised privacy issue concerns even though he was promised taller trees along his property line to screen the new buildings. He asked that the new units not include balconies. He also

asked that they have a rigorous application process to screen future tenants. Mr. Flores asked if a traffic signal could be added and something to deter speeding, but not speed bumps, as he drives low-profile vehicles. He expressed his condolences for those families affected by the deaths of the La Habra High School students caused by traffic accidents and said traffic is a big concern. Mr. Flores asked that they take into consideration the difference in grade to ensure his property doesn't slide over.

Chair Manley invited the Applicant up to offer a rebuttal.

Mr. Woodward thanked everyone for their comments and began by explaining that the new units will not have balconies. Instead, they will have a decorative iron element. As for the request to install an island, Mr. Woodward said they did look into that but there was not enough room in the City's right-of-way on Walker to meet the Fire Department's requirements for two lanes of travel and an island. He said that they did however, propose to install stamped concrete at the entrance to give a visual queue that vehicles should slow down. Mr. Woodward said that the City did require a traffic study, which was included in the staff report, which speaks to the VMTs (Vehicle Miles Traveled) and said Darryl could elaborate more on that. Mr. Woodward concluded by saying they are not increasing the density, they meet the zoning, and that the General Plan allows for those 21 new units. He thanked the Commission for the time to respond and said he would be available to answer any additional questions.

Chair Manley asked if the Commissioners had any questions of Staff or the Applicant.

Vice Chair Mahecha asked what are the chances of the Church building a parking structure for their guests to alleviate some of the parking concerns. Mr. Miller said the Church doesn't have money to put up proper fencing or manage the field along the back portion of their property, let alone money to build a new parking structure. Chair Manley asked if there is a possibility to develop the old softball field into additional parking down the road. Mr. Miller said that field is still used for parking but acknowledged that there is a parking issue as their guests don't use the church's parking lot out of convenience to get in and out quicker. He also said that there are two modular structures on the property that will be removed down the line, and that area could be used for additional parking, and that they could look at adding additional parking in the field area. Mr. Woodward clarified that the softball field is no longer being used by Rosery Highschool. Father Goldin cautioned that as a parish of the Diocese of Orange, any future project would have to be looked at by the Diocese, as they are the overall property owner.

Vice Chair Mahecha asked if there was a reason why the lot line wasn't adjusted to allow ingress and egress off of Monte Vista. Contract Planner Taylor said that there is a grade difference of five to eight feet between OLG and the properties on Monte Vista, making it unfeasible to make a path for vehicles on to Monte Vista.

Commissioner Cardenas asked if the City's street sweeper would have access to the new development. Mr. Woodward said no, that since they are private streets, they have to maintain them themselves. Commissioner Cardenas asked if church-goers can exit off of Third Avenue. Chair Manley said yes, they can enter and exit off of Third Avenue. Commissioner Cardenas

asked if they looked at allowing an exit from the new development onto Third Avenue, as Chari Manley put it, to alleviate ingress and egress on Walker. Mr. Woodward said that was looked at. They had considered having the ingress and egress solely off of Third Avenue and not Walker Avenue, but in the end, chose not to do that.

Vice Chair Mahecha asked if the City could install a street light. Mr. Taylor asked where would the street light go. Chair Manley said there were comments made about concerns with pedestrians crossing La Habra Boulevard and wondered if they meant traffic signal instead of street light. Vice Chair Mahecha said she thought someone had requested a street light somewhere near the new development site. She also thought that another person did speak about a traffic signal at La Habra and Marian saying that is not a part of this project but wondered if the City could provide a street light. The Commissioners discussed if the residents had requested a street light or a traffic signal. Commissioner Ramsland said that based on the amount of traffic generated by the new development, it wouldn't warrant a new traffic signal at La Habra Boulevard and Marian Street. Mr. Taylor said there are no proposed traffic signals or street lights at the entrance of the development on Walker Avenue. He also explained that the new development will have street lighting and the photometric study included in the staff report shows that there will be no spillage onto the neighboring properties.

Chair Manley asked if there was a traffic study done for the project. Mr. Taylor confirmed that a traffic study was conducted for the project and went over the project's impact numbers per the study. Chair Manley asked who sets the standards. Mr. Taylor said those standards are set by the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE). Mr. Taylor said that based on the numbers of the traffic study, the project does not require an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) or any additional environmental studies. There was a discussion on what would trigger an EIR.

Chair Manley spoke about the concerns with emergency service vehicles not having access when vehicles are parked on both sides of Marian Street and wondered if the fire department raised any concerns when they reviewed the plans for this proposed project. Mr. Taylor said the fire department had multiple opportunities to review the plans. He explained that the cul-de-sac being proposed at the entrance of the new development is a design that was borrowed from the fire department, the street widths of the new development meet their requirement, and all the new units will be sprinklered. Mr. Taylor said that additionally, the fire department looked at the fire hydrants near the site to ensure they have adequate flow and have required an additional fire hydrant in the new proposed development.

Chair Manley asked for clarification if there would be access on to Guadalupe Park to the south from the new development. Mr. Taylor said there will be no access, as there is a six foot tall masonry block wall with no door or gate.

Commissioner Ramsland asked if the Applicant would think about making one of the affordable units an accessible unit. Chair Manley said that for the record, the Applicant nodded affirmatively.

Commissioner Ramsland asked if Mr. Taylor could speak about the grading of the project to address the flooding concerns brought by a resident. Mr. Taylor explained that the site will flow south and westward after grading is completed. A utility plan was included with the staff report showing a new storm system that will collect water and distribute it out to the connecting storm system. Therefore, there should be no flooding on site.

Commissioner Ramsland spoke about the front setback and how he thought the Applicant did a good job in trying to meet the code. The Commission noted that had that been considered the side setback, they would only need a five foot setback instead of the 10 feet they are proposing.

Chair Manley spoke about the parking concerns that were raised. He reiterated that the project meets the parking requirements and that sometimes the existing residents are causing the current parking issues. Vice Chair Mahecha added that the Commission can set conditions on new developments to require that the residents use their garages only for parking and explained that they can't do that with the existing single-family units.

Vice Chair Mahecha spoke about affordable housing. She said that the moderate income levels don't accurately reflect the incomes of the residents of La Habra and that affordable units should be made available to the residents of La Habra.

Commissioner Cardenas asked what steps a resident can take if they feel the need for speed bumps in their neighborhood. Mr. Taylor said they would have to contact the Traffic Division of the Engineering Department.

Chair Manley closed the public hearing and asked for a discussion or a motion.

The Chair began by explaining that the Commission takes every comment, concern, and feedback very seriously when reviewing projects. They look at how can they get projects right within their purview, the code, and the requirements. The Chair said that we need housing and the State is holding cities accountable to develop more housing. He explained that this is a unique project as the developer is a member of the community and it is in their best interest to continue to be a good neighbor. He concluded by saying the project meets all the code requirements and that he is in favor of the project.

Vice Chair Mahecha said that she really likes that out of all the projects, this one has been the one with the most green space.

Commissioner Ramsland said that this is the first project he has reviewed where he has no concerns about parking, saying that all the cars for the development should be able to park onsite.

Moved by Chair Manley and seconded by Commissioner Cardenas, Approving Resolution No. 25-07 Entitled: A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LA HABRA, CALIFORNIA, MAKING THE REQUIRED FINDINGS AND (1) APPROVING LOT LINE ADJUSTMENT (LLA) 24-0002 TO RELOCATE AN EXISTING LOT LINE IN ORDER TO ESTABLISH A 1.59 ACRE LOT, AS PER THE APPROVED

PLANS AND SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS; AND (2) RECOMMENDING THAT THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVE PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT (PUD) 24-0001 TO CONSTRUCT 21 DWELLING UNITS (APARTMENT HOMES) INCLUDING TWO AFFORDABLE UNITS FOR RENT TO MODERATE-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS ON SAID 1.59 ACRE LOT AT THE PROPERTIES CURRENTLY ADDRESSED AS 900-970 WEST LA HABRA BOULEVARD (ASSESSOR'S PARCEL NUMBERS 298-121-01, 298-011-021 AND 298-011-22), AS PER THE APPROVED PLANS AND SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS, AND MAKING THE DETERMINATION THAT LLA 24-0002 IS EXEMPT FROM THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) PURSUANT TO SECTION 15332, CLASS 32: "INFILL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS" OF THE CEQA GUIDELINES.

The roll call vote was as follows:

AYES: COMMISSIONERS: MANLEY, CARDENAS, MAHECHA, RAMSLAND
NOES: COMMISSIONERS: NOE
ABSTAIN: COMMISSIONERS: NONE
ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS: NONE

Secretary Lopez said that the Planning Commission's decision on the Lot Line Adjustment is final and that the Planned Unit Development application will be forwarded to City Council for their approval.

COMMENTS FROM STAFF

Senior Planner Ash Syed said that due to lack of agenda items, there will be no Planning Commission meeting on March 10, 2025, and asked the Chair to adjourn the meeting to March 24, 2025.

COMMENTS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Vice Chair Mahecha expressed her appreciation for the public for showing up and expressing their concerns.

Chair Manley adjourned the meeting in memory of the motorcyclist killed in an accident on Hacienda and Whitter.

ADJOURNMENT: 8:08 p.m. to the Planning Commission meeting on March 24, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,

Veronica Lopez,
Secretary