

August 2, 2017

THE WALNUT CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

A Regular Meeting of the Walnut City Planning Commission was held on the above-referenced date. Chairperson Fernandez called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

FLAG SALUTE: Commissioner: Fernandez

ROLL CALL: Commissioners: Fernandez, Wu, Dy, Koo, Perez

ALSO PRESENT: Community Development Director Weiner; City Planner Carlson; City Attorney Leibold; City Engineer Gilbertson; Associate Planner Vasquez; Community Development Technician Munoz.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:

C/Fernandez opened Oral Communications for Public Comment.

C/Fernandez moved to close Oral Communications. PC/Perez seconded. Without objection motion passed 5-0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. July 19, 2017 (Regular Minutes)

VC/Wu moved to approve the minutes of July 19, 2017. PC/Dy seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

PUBLIC HEARING:

None

OLD BUSINESS:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

2. Site Plan Case/ Architectural Review (SPC/AR) 2016-108 (Xu) – A request to construct four (4) new single-family dwelling units located on Gartel Drive (APNs: 8709-010-032, 035, 035, & 037).

AP/Vasquez presented the staff report.

C/Fernandez inquired about the residents who had concerns with the proposed project.

AP/Vasquez stated that in response to the neighbor notices, residents off of Monica Way had questions and concerns with the elevation heights of the proposed homes. AP Vasquez notified the Planning Commission that detailed project information was provided to them.

PC/Dy confirmed that the total cubic-yards of dirt being exported is 12,000 which equals 1,200 truckloads of dirt.

PC/Perez asked if the surrounding residents are concerned with any effects during the construction of the homes.

AP/Vasquez confirmed that concerns expressed were related to the effects to their homes during the construction of the four (4) homes; for example the road-ways, accessibility, perimeter fencing/walls, etc.

PC/Dy asked if an export plan was submitted by the applicant.

AP/Vasquez mentioned that no haul route plan has been submitted for the Commission's review but if approved, the information would be required during Engineering and Grading Plan Review.

PC/Dy asked if there has been any type of project off of Gartel Drive or Fuerte Drive similar in terms of export size.

CE/Gilbertson mentioned that a majority of the subject site will be cut and only a portion will be filled, but that the ten (10) lot subdivision further east of the subject site was recently graded with a good amount export.

CE/Gilbertson further indicated that the exact amount of earthwork to be exported is unknown at the moment.

PC/Dy asked if there are any concerns with the proposed project.

CE/Gilbertson commented on Gartel Drive being a twenty (20') foot wide roadway which consists of sharp curves and turns. In this type of roadway layout, a hauling plan will need to be carefully analyzed to mitigate any impacts.

CE/Gilbertson further noted that trash and delivery trucks are able to access Gartel Drive.

C/Fernandez inquired about the Shea Development off Valley Boulevard and Pierre Road and the amount of earthwork associated with that project.

CDD/Weiner specified that the amount of earthwork was less.

C/Fernandez asked about the access between the retaining wall, the chain-link fence, and gate south of the subject site.

AP/Vasquez stated that between the south property at 20475 Gartel Drive and the proposed lot directly north, there is an existing chain-link fence that separates the properties, but the location of the chain-link fence is not located on exact property lines. AP/Vasquez explained that the new construction of retaining walls and fences will be built on property lines which will then create a seven (7') foot gap between both properties. AP/Vasquez further mentioned that access to the created dead-space will be coordinated with the two (2) parties involved.

C/Fernandez asked that the requirements for retaining walls be explained.

CE/Gilbertson stated that the Planning Department looks at retaining wall heights, materials, and setbacks. However, the Building Department also looks at the retaining wall heights to ensure proposed grades are achieved.

PC/Dy inquired about the retaining wall heights not being indicated on the plans.

AP/Vasquez stated that attached to the plans is a Wall and Fence Plan that indicates all heights of the retaining walls, which ranges from three (3') feet to six (6') feet.

PC/Dy asked about the gate that is located around the perimeter of the proposed homes.

AP/Vasquez stated that each parcel will have perimeter fencing, but there is a driveway gate shown across the access easement in which there is a Condition of Approval (COA) requiring the gate to be removed.

CDD/Weiner explained that any fencing or gate higher than three (3') feet that is located within the front yard setback requires Planning Commission (PC) approval.

C/Fernandez inquired about attachment five (5) of the staff report, which illustrated a cross section of the proposed dwelling units in relation to the existing homes off Monica Way.

AP/Vasquez explained that attachment five (5) is a cross section detail of the pad elevations and architecture of the homes with the ridge heights in relationship to 907 and 911 Monica Way.

C/Fernandez asked if the proposed homes exceed the ridge line.

AP/Vasquez confirmed that the proposed dwelling units are roughly one (1') foot to eighteen (18") inches below the ridge line.

C/Fernandez opened the item for Public Comment.

Applicant/Rich Yeh stated that he is available for any questions.

C/Fernandez asked about the area to the south of the proposed homes with the existing chain-link fence.

Applicant/Yeh stated that a six (6') foot high fence will be placed on the property line and if the existing chain-link fence is within the subject site, the chain-link fence will be removed.

AP/Vasquez noted that the existing chain-link fence is on the property directly south of the subject site.

Azhar Majeed, resident, stated his opposition for the proposed project and requested for the heights of the proposed homes to be lowered so they are not visible from his property on Monica Way.

Ben Huntsman, resident, thanked AP/Vasquez for all of his help in relation to the proposed project and mentioned his opposition. Mr. Huntsman stated his desire for the existing trees to remain and the need for a six (6') foot split-face concrete wall. Mr. Huntsman further commented on the extensiveness of the proposed earthwork and the amount of dirt being exported.

Rolando Utz, resident, stated his opposition for the proposed project in terms of the height of the proposed dwelling units and the visibility from his residence off Monica Way.

C/Fernandez asked the proposed height of the tallest roof of the proposed four (4) dwelling units.

Applicant/Yeh stated that the top of the roof is below the ridge line which is approximately six (6") inches.

Mr. Majeed mentioned that the proposed homes will block the view of the valley.

The Commission and the Applicant further discuss the ridge line in relation to the existing homes off Monica Way and the height of the proposed homes.

PC/Perez asked the time frame for the grading and construction of the proposed four (4) dwelling units.

Applicant/Yeh indicated that the Contractor will work with the City to determine the exact time frame, but an estimated time from start to finish of construction is estimated at eighteen (18) months.

PC/Dy suggested that a topographical map be presented to allow the Commission to better view the concern of residents off Monica Way.

C/Fernandez motioned to close Public Comment. PC/Koo seconded. Without objection motion passed 5-0.

PC/Perez stated that the cross section map that was submitted was only two (2) dimensional and that a detailed illustration can help with the visualization of potential impact(s) to the residence off Monica Way.

PC/Dy agreed with the need for a more detailed illustration to be submitted and shared his concern for the 1,200 truckloads of dirt being removed.

CE/Gilbertson stated that Gartel Drive was resurfaced about five (5) years ago but Fuerte Drive, which is further from the site, needs maintenance. CE/Gilbertson mentioned that the City will take a video of the current state of the street and will require the developer to post a bond. This will ensure that any damage made to the street by construction of the project will be repaired.

PC/Dy inquired about the possibility for the obstruction of traffic off Gartel Drive.

CE/Gilbertson noted that Gartel Drive is twenty (20') feet wide and that the hauling of dirt may be limited to certain hours of the day. CE/Gilbertson further mentioned that the turn off Fuerte Drive will be hard to make and the City may require for them to use Meadowpass Road or Pierre Road.

The Commission and Staff further discuss the topography of the site.

PC/Koo stated his concern in regards to the orientation for the proposed home in relation to the existing property adjacent at 20475 Gartel Drive. PC/Koo asked the distance between the two (2) residences.

AP/Vasquez indicated that the dimension from the proposed home to the side property line is seventeen (17') feet plus about fifteen (15') feet from the existing property at 20475 Gartel Drive to the side property line.

PC/Koo noted that his main concern is the orientation of proposed project.

PC/Dy stated his concern for the proposed retaining wall on the shared property line between 20479 and 20475 Gartel Drive.

C/Fernandez reopened the item for Public Comment.

Ana Gurule, resident, stated that her residence will be the most impacted by the project. Ms. Gurule mentioned her concern with the construction, the removal of the dirt, and the size of the proposed homes.

C/Fernandez motioned to close Public Comment. PC/Perez seconded. Without objection motion passed 5-0.

VC/Wu mentioned the existing homes surrounding the site that are averaging 7,000 square-feet and asked the location of those homes.

AP/Vasquez specified that north of the subject site there are three (3) existing homes that were recently constructed that range from 5,500 to 6,000 square-feet in size. AP/Vasquez mentioned that part of the ten (10) lot subdivision that is currently ongoing have approvals for three (3) homes that are roughly 7,200 to 7,800 square-feet in size. AP/Vasquez further explained that there are larger homes immediately adjacent to the proposed homes that are about 5,000 and 5,500 square-feet in size.

The Commission and staff further discuss the surrounding residences in terms of size.

C/Fernandez stated that with the Assessor Parcel Map, the subject site is meant for four (4) residential properties with a private drive aisle. C/Fernandez mentioned that the surrounding neighborhood properties do have larger homes in the area but in regards views, there is no View Ordinance to implement.

CA/Leibold confirmed there is no View Protection Ordinance and that there are four (4) conforming lots that are meant for the development of four (4) single-family dwelling units. CA/Leibold further explained that the development standards in terms of height and mass are dictated by the City's development standards as part of the Zoning Code.

C/Fernandez noted that lot coverage, setbacks, height limitations, and other Zoning requirements are met with the proposed four (4) homes. C/Fernandez further mentioned that a reduction in size in terms of living area would be reasonable and asked if the applicant had downsized from the first submittal.

AP/Vasquez indicated that the applicant had indeed made reductions.

PC/Koo asked if the applicant is willing to change the orientation of 20479 Gartel Drive.

Applicant/Yeh stated that the lot has limitations due to the rectangular shape.

The Commission and the applicant further discuss the orientation of 20479 Gartel Drive.

PC/Dy asked if the applicant can submit an elevation to show the view from the residence off Monica Way in relation to the proposed homes.

Applicant/Yeh mentioned the possibility of getting into the neighbor's property off Monica Way to conduct the simulation and prepare the elevation.

CDD/Weiner indicated that cooperation from the neighbors will be needed but also noted that a COA can be made to only allow single-story homes on the subject site.

C/Fernandez asked if there is a specific reason why 20487 Gartel Drive was pushed back.

AP/Vasquez stated that 20487 Gartel Drive has a front-yard setback that is measured from the edge of the driveway at 32'-6".

C/Fernandez inquired if the proposed residence can be pushed forward to help with the view concern expressed by the neighbors off Monica Way.

Applicant/Yeh confirmed to measure the front-yard setback from the drive-aisle and agreed to modify those changes on the plan.

MOTION ON ITEM 2

PC/Dy motioned to continue SPC/AR 2016-108. PC/Perez seconded.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Fernandez, Wu, Dy, Koo, Perez
NOES: None
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: None

Motion to continue passed 5-0.

CDD/Weiner noted that the motion to continue SPC/AR 2016-108 will be "off calendar," in order to allow the applicant ample time to address the recommended changes indicated and also allow for proper noticing to the public.

DISCUSSION/TRANSACTION:

None

REPORTS AND COMMENTS:

- CDD/Weiner informed the Commission that Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) and the View Ordinance will be presented to the City Council at a study session in September.

ADJOURNMENT:

This meeting adjourned at 8:16 p.m. The next Planning Commission Meeting is set for a Regular Meeting on Wednesday, September 6th, 2017, at 7:00 p.m. (Walnut City Hall, 21201 La Puente Road, Walnut)

Passed and Approved on this 6th day of September 2017.


Chairperson, Mark Fernandez


Tom Weiner, Community Development Director