

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING LANCASTER ARCHITECTURAL AND DESIGN COMMISSION

November 14, 2008

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair Cook called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m. in the Council Chambers and made an announcement that Chairman Parker had resigned from the commission effective immediately.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Hall led the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Commissioners Donlon, Hall, Harvey and Stallworth and Vice Chair Cook.

ABSENT: Commissioner Wiley.

Also present were the following: Brian Ludicke (Planning Director), Silvia Donovan (Principal Planner), Chuen Ng (Associate Planner), Tess Epling (Recording Secretary) and an audience of 3.

CONSENT CALENDAR

1. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Minutes from the Regular Meeting of October 10, 2008.

It was moved by Commissioner Stallworth and seconded by Commissioner Harvey to approve the minutes from the regular meeting of October 10, 2008.

AYES: Commissioners Donlon, Hall, Harvey and Stallworth and Vice Chair Cook.
NOES: None.
ABSTAIN: None.
ABSENT: Commissioner Wiley.

The meeting was reconvened in Large Parks, Recreation & Arts Conference Room.

CONTINUED ITEM

2. DESIGN TERMINOLOGY, DEFINITIONS AND POWERPOINT PRESENTATION OF DESIGN FEATURES WITHIN NEIGHBORHOODS

Chuen Ng conducted a PowerPoint presentation of single family developments from various cities demonstrating architectural design features such as parkways, recessed garages, paseos, walls, courtyards, trails and gates. Discussion ensued regarding parkways within developments are typically maintained by Homeowners Association (HOA) or by landscape maintenance districts. The municipal code indicates that landscaping seen from the street must be maintained. It was the general opinion of the body that there should be a continuity and consistency of appearance of street trees, walls can be enhanced with materials and pilasters, and recessed garages are preferable so as not to dominate the streetscape. Courtyards create a usable area within the front yard and reduce landscape area. Photos submitted by Commissioner Hall were reviewed providing examples of front yards dominated by concrete, residences with the garage as the focal point, side yard gates that are screened versus not-screened and front yard landscaping where residents were cited by Code Enforcement for not having enough green. Discussion included placing limitations on the amount of concrete in the front yard, adding requirements for opaque gates to ensure that trash bins are not visible from the street, and aesthetically pleasing landscaping that meets the new ordinance.

Discussion of a 6-month timeline of agenda and topics of future meetings was held. The draft landscape ordinance was discussed briefly indicating that changes to the ordinance are likely. An approved tree and plant list and the draft ordinance were also provided to the commission.

The commissioners approved using Santa Clarita design guidelines as the model for the City's design guidelines. Staff was requested to summarize the guidelines by using bullet points, providing a PowerPoint presentation, and discussing each feature that would be appropriate for the city of Lancaster. Commissioners voiced concern with staff's ability to be able to hold developers accountable to follow the guidelines. Staff explained that guidelines are advisory whereas ordinances are regulatory; but, developers can still be held accountable so that standards are met, especially if there is a clause in the General Plan that specifically indicates that responsibility. Silvia also pointed out that the task should be a collaborative effort with the Building Industry Association (BIA) and developers and there should be an outreach to the community.

Discussion by staff indicated that once the commissioners establish the vision for the city, then staff's role would be to formulate the ideas into the design guidelines. The commissioners cited the following factors that they think are important: consistency and continuity of look/appearance, streetscape, parks, schools, lighting, landscape, walls, paseos, walkways, common areas, courtyards, safe and friendly community, sense of community and safety. They cited places such as Santa Clarita, Laguna Niguel and Ventura as ideal and pleasing communities to live in. They were tasked to take photos and to be prepared to discuss the photos at the next

meetings. The commissioners agreed that it would also be helpful to look at the design guidelines of desert communities such as Scottsdale, AZ.

At the next meeting, Vern Lawson, Redevelopment Director, will have a presentation on the city's image and branding campaign.

PUBLIC BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR – NON-AGENDIZED ITEMS

There were speakers in the audience who wished to comment as follows:

David Sinclair, resident of Lancaster, California, reiterated the importance of considering sustainability in future developments.

Matt Buchanan, resident of Lancaster, CA, agreed that the aspect of sustainability is important and suggested having that incorporated in the guidelines. He also mentioned that energy efficiency and environment friendliness are required for certain types of projects under state legislation.

The issue about the replacement of former Chairman Parker was brought up and Vice Chair Cook explained that the Mayor will be meeting with the commissioners to discuss the situation, a seventh commissioner will be named and the position of Chairman will eventually be filled.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:49 p.m. to Friday, December 12, 2008, at 4:00 p.m., in the Council Chambers, City of Lancaster.

DIANA COOK, Chairperson
Lancaster Architectural and Design Commission

ATTEST:

BRIAN S. LUDICKE, Planning Director
City of Lancaster