**Altadena Town Council**

**Community Standards District Committee**

**Meeting Minutes: 26 March 2013**

Meeting at Senior Center

Present:

Daniel Harlow

Mark Goldschmidt

George Jenkins

Donald Kirkland

Ed Myers

Jim Osterling

Jonathan Potter

Peggy Taylor

Attending from County Planning Department:

Mitch Glaser

Adam Thurtell

1. Meeting was called to order at 6:45 PM

2. Minutes were approved, Mark Goldschmidt moved, George Jenkins second.

3. Agenda was amended to include a presentation by committee member Mark

Goldschmidt of suggestions for changes to the CSD prepared by a sub-committee of

the Town Council in 2011.

4. Ed Myers informed us that we would be meeting at the Altadena Senior Center for

the foreseeable future. First meeting on the second Tuesday of each month we will

meet in committee, on the 4th Tuesday we would welcome the public. To welcome

new members Kirkland and Jenkins, we all introduced ourselves with a short bio.

5. Jim Osterling gave a brief welcoming speech, and thanked County planners Mitch

Glaser and Adam Thurtell.

6. Jim Osterling has called Eric Duyshart of the City of Pasadena to ask him when he

might be able to brief the committee, but has not yet made contact. Also, briefing by

commercial leasing agents and local commercial landowners are still to be arranged.

Also, Jim will speak with Peggy, staff at the La Crescenta Foothill Design Group.

7. Mitch Glazer suggested that our committee wait before talking with the group that

worked on the CSD for La Crescenta, saying there were some misunderstandings and

expectations that the group held that were not realized. He said he hoped that by

working closely with him and Adam these kind of misunderstandings could be avoided.

8. Mark Goldschmidt presented the findings of the Altadena Town Council Land Use

Committee sub-committee convened in 2011 to suggest changes to the residential

Community Standards District.

1. Minor additions of 500 square feet or less would be allowed for homes falling

within the “prevailing average setback if the line of the existing house already

falls within the setback.” The idea is to allow additions in cases where the

“prevailing setback” rule would make this impossible due to other, much larger

properties on the same block with very deep setbacks. Minimum 20-foot setback

would still prevail.

2. Minor additions of 500 sq. ft. or less would be allowed to encroach into a side

yard setback if the line of the existing house already falls within the setback.

Many houses built prior to the CSD do not adhere to the setback rules of 10% of

lot width for a single story, and this change would allow homeowners to build

additions without compromising the architectural integrity of their houses.

3. Residential garages on steeply sloping terrain in hillside-zoned areas would be

allowed within standard front setbacks to avoid excessive grading. Minimum

setback would be 10 feet.

4. Swimming pools and spas are currently allowed within the rear setback of a lot,

or to encroach on the side setback, but cannot be sited in both. Recommended

change is to allow pools to be located in either or both setbacks.

9. Discussion of the rules on hedges and fences within front setbacks ensued; no

recommendation had been made on this issue by the LUC subcommittee. 15-20% of

R-1 properties in Altadena do not conform, and require a CUP under current CSD rules.

Mitch Glaser said the CUP requirement was added when the CSD was formulated;

standard County regulations call only for a Director’s Review. Mitch Glaser suggested

that our committee could modify the CSD to require only a Director’s Review for a

Yard Modification. This is standard in the County. He also suggested the committee

think about either increasing the number of letters in opposition needed to trigger

further review, or completely eliminate any quota or set number of opposing letters.

10. Mitch Glazer explained the difference between a Site Plan Review, a Conditional

Use Permit, a Mini Conditional Use Permit, and a Director’s Review.

1. A Site Plan Review is granted by a planner over the counter. There is a small fee.

2. A Director’s Review requires notification of neighbors within a 500 ft. radius, and

a decision by the Zoning Director, there is no public hearing. If two letters or more

letters from neighbors oppose the requested change, a more extensive review is

mandated. Cost is approximately $1,000.

3. A Mini-conditional Use Permit is no longer used.

4. A Conditional Use Permit requires a public hearing, notification of neighbors

within a certain radius (1000’ [in 5th Supvisorial District] or 500’), review by the Town Council Land Use Committee, and a recommendation to the County Planning Commission by the Town Council. Cost is approximately $8,000 and process takes one to two years.

11. Mitch Glaser suggested that committee members looking at R-1 zoning also look at

R-2 and R-3 which have been recently modified to make deviations from zoning codes

easier to obtain.

12. The committee split into two working groups.

RESIDENTIAL WORKING GROUP

Jonathan Potter, Peggy Taylor, Mark Goldschmidt, Donald Kirkland, Marge

Nichols

COMMERCIAL WORKING GROUP

Dan Harlow, George Jenkins, Meredith Miller, Ed Myers, Jim Osterling,

Tecumseh Shackelford

13. Mitch Glaser told the committee that there is a great deal of overlap between

zoning and community planning, and that our committee should not limit itself strictly

to issues covered by the CSD. He emphasized that we have an opportunity to make

changes beyond what can be covered in the CSD and we should not hesitate to put

these forward if we feel they will benefit the community. County Planning is open to

working with us on broader community issues.

14. Move to adjourn by Peggy Taylor was approved at 8:25 PM

– Minutes prepared by Mark Goldschmidt in absence of Secretary