

CITY OF LA HABRA HEIGHTS
MINUTES OF A SPECIAL JOINT MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL
AND PLANNING COMMISSION

APRIL 18, 2002

OPENING CEREMONIES

1. **CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

A Special Joint Meeting of the City Council and the Planning Commission was called to order by Mayor Millsap at 6:09 P.M. on Thursday, April 18, 2002, at the Community Center, 1245 Hacienda Road, La Habra Heights.

2. **ROLL CALL**

Councilmembers present: Borrowe, Carroll, Engelhardt, Klein and Mayor Millsap. Planning Commissioners present: Bergman, Blagden Skinner, Wolfe, Alternate Hinz and Chairman Douglas. Also present: Interim City Manager Diaz, Planning Director Brady, City Engineer Milano, and Deputy City Clerk Coulter.

3. **FLAG SALUTE**

Mike Cole led the flag salute.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON MATTERS ON THE AGENDA

David Maislen, Flowerfield Lane, stated that he felt that the Planning Commission was making the grading rules more difficult, increasing many permit fees and adding more. He felt they were making a difficult process impossible and this would bring down home values.

Katie Martin, Reposado Drive felt that the changes discouraged repairs and upgrades on homes. She felt that this would bring down property values. She felt that surveys should not be required in every case. The suggested new rules defining remodel and new construction would allow increase of the house size up to 10% to be considered a remodel, but anything larger considered new construction. In her opinion she felt this was unacceptable and she also objected to the increased fees.

Paul Spothelfer, West Road, spoke against the survey of property lines unless it was a new home. He also disagreed with the small remodel area allowed before it would be called new construction. He did not feel there needed to be a licensed landscape architect on the staff. He felt the changes would bring down the value of homes.

Noor Khan, Fullerton Road, presented a letter she was giving to Fire Chief Nielsen. She stated that the Diaz property, now owned by the Puente Hills Native Habitat Authority was not being properly cleared according to ordinance. She requested that the City enforce this ordinance.

Mayor Millsap explained that the meeting tonight was a study session to bring forward concerns and potential problems for the interest of all the Community, Staff, Planning Commission and the City Council. Nothing will be decided.

Council Member Klein stated that there have been several situations lately that have caused problems due to not knowing where the property lines are. There have also been codes found that need to be clarified.

Planning Commission Chairman Douglas stated that the Planning Department and Engineering are having problems understanding some of the codes that often require clarification, causing added cost and time.

Interim City Manager Diaz presented an overview of the problem items:

- Require property line survey for grading and construction.
Will cost money, but only a small amount of delay.
- Require certified copy of Title Report as part of application.
This should be already in the hands of any property owner.
- Multi-lot Development.
This would require any proposing to construct a single dwelling unit to file an application for a double lot development if the subject parcel has sufficient land area to accommodate more than one home. This will add cost.
- Redefinition of remodel vs. new construction.
While adding to the permit costs at the outset, will provide greater valuable information and proper mitigation and review fees.
- Amend Owner-Builder requirements and fees.
This will enable the City to collect the proper fees for permit issuance and inspections. It will encourage property owners to use appropriate licensed and experienced contractors.
- Limitations of who may grant modifications.
While increasing the time for review and issuance of a permit, this will eliminate second-guessing. It will also give staff the ability to inform builders what has not been approved and the reasons why.
- Landscape plan requirements.
Licensed landscape Architect. It will give greater assurance that the landscaping being proposed will survive in this locale and be installed properly.
- View Preservation (Story Poles) Poles.
The codification of this requirement will eliminate any question as to its requirement. This condition gives adjoining and potentially impacted property owners a better idea of what is being proposed.

- Changes in building codes after construction has commenced.
This clarifies that the owner is protected from requirement changes after construction has commenced.
- Measurement of building heights.
This will have a tremendous impact on future development and construction in La Habra Heights. It makes the allowable height and how it is measured an easier and understandable process.
- View preservation and impervious surface coverage.
We need greater policy direction or clarification in these areas.
- Administrative processing changes.
This will eliminate questions regarding whether the building under construction is per the approved plans and those plans are what the Commission and Council understood was approved.
- Pre-filing conference fees.
This code is hard to enforce and difficult to collect. Interim City Manager Diaz recommended this code be removed. In most cities pre-filing meetings are underwritten by the city.
- Issues for GPAC review.
Council may wish to have the issue of oversized homes and slope densities as well as other issues reviewed and discussed by the GPAC and/or Planning Commission. Some suggestions requiring zoning ordinance revision will require public hearings before the Planning Commission and City Council.

Planning Director Brady presented the requirements for Story Poles. She explained the materials needed, markings, location, certification and time period for poles.

City Engineer Milano explained that the general changes needed in the grading ordinances are for clarifications and enhancements.

The City Council and the Planning Commission discussed which changes should be addressed first and then given to the Planning Commission to discuss. There could also be other problems that come up for the Planning Commission or the Engineering Department that would need consideration.

The consensus of the City Council was to turn over the whole list of problem areas to the Planning Commission. Staff will then prioritize the easiest items to be handled first. The Planning Commission will then work through the remaining items with public hearings and discussions as needed.

CITY COUNCIL AND PLANNING COMMISSION COMMENTS

Mayor Pro Tem Borrowe added that in the height ordinance he would like to see chimneys considered as far as view preservation is concerned.

Planning Commission Chairman Douglas explained that the same thing is true of roof utilities. It might be good to speak to GPAC to make sure they were considering this sort of thing for goals and policies.

Commissioner Wolfe expressed his desire for guidance from the City Council as to their view of the meaning of "rural"

Council Member Klein explained that the question of definition for "rural" should go to the GPAC committee.

Commission Member Skinner noted that first of all the application form should be revised and when an application is submitted it should not be considered complete until every item is correctly and fully entered.

Chairman Douglas stated that staff and Planning should be able to say "no" to people without incurring any abuse.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Millsap adjourned the Special Joint City Council and Planning Commission meeting at 8:20 P.M.

ATTEST:

CITY CLERK