

La Jolla Shores Permit Review Committee Minutes
4:00 p.m. Tuesday, March 24, 2015
La Jolla Recreation Center, 615 Prospect Street, La Jolla, CA

1. **Welcome and Call to Order:** Phil Merten, Interim Chair
Merten explained the City of San Diego permit review process. He noted that the 8490 Whale Watch Way project, which is the sole item on today's agenda, will be heard by the La Jolla Community Planning Agenda (CPA) on April 2, 2015.
2. **Adoption of the Agenda**
Donovan moved that the agenda be adopted; Emerson seconded the motion. The agenda was adopted by a vote of 5-0-1 (chair abstaining).
3. **Non-Agenda Public Comment** – 2 minutes each for items not on the agenda.
No public comment.
4. **Non-Agenda Committee Member Comments**
The La Jolla Historical Society summer architectural camp is now taking sign-ups.
5. **Chair Comments**
The Whitney mixed-use building was previously set for hearing in early April by the Planning Commission, but has now been pushed back, probably to late April or May.
6. **Project Review**

8490 Whale Watch Way Residence

- Project No. 328415
- Type of Structure: Single Family Residence
- Location: 8490 Whale Watch Way
- Applicant: James Gates, 619.682.4083, 619-823-4083 jg@publicdigital.com
- Applicant's Rep: Paul Metcalf, 619-733-6056 pmdevcon@sbcglobal.com
- Project Manager: John Fisher, 619-446-5231 JSFisher@sandiego.gov

Project Description: PROCESS 3 - CDP, and SDP to demolish an existing single family residence and construct a 7,016 two-story, over basement single family residence on a 20,093 sq. ft. lot at 8490 Whale Watch Way. The site is located in the Single Family Zone of the La Jolla Shores Planned District within the La Jolla Community Plan area, Coastal Overlay (non-appealable), Coastal Height Limit, Residential Tandem Parking.

Previous Committee Action on 1-28-2014

Motion: Findings cannot be made for Site Development Permit or a Coastal Development Permit for Project No. 328415. It is not compatible with the neighborhood in form, bulk and scale. In particular, the east side of the building envelope is incompatible with the neighboring structures. The size, form, and relationship of the the proposed project will disrupt the architectural unity of the neighborhood.

Motion carries: 5-0-0. Approve: Emerson, Lucas, Merten, Naegle, Schenck

Previous Committee Action on 11-19-2014

Motion: Findings cannot be made for a Site Development Permit or a Coastal Development Permit for Project No. 328415. It is not compatible with the neighborhood in form, bulk and scale. The size, form, and relationship of the proposed project will disrupt the architectural unity of the neighborhood, based on the presentation, drawings and information presented on November 19. 5-2-1

Motion carries: 5-2-1.

The project will be heard by the La Jolla Community Planning Association (LJCPA) on April 2, 2015, and is tentatively set for hearing before the San Diego City Planning Commission on April 16.

Presenter: Paul Metcalf, representing the applicant.

The architectural style of the project is pretty much the same, but the surfaces have changed, as has the landscaping. Our revisions have focused on set-backs and design concepts. We have increased the setbacks and altered the heights of the walls. The square footage, however, remains the same due to increased use of space within the outer walls. To summarize, we have increased the setback on the NE, increased the setback on the SE, and altered the "programming" on the front of the house (West).

- *Setbacks:* The setbacks have in general been increased by two or three feet. The set-back at the southeast corner, closest to neighbor Caringi's home, is 8 feet. The setbacks on the north, abutting on neighbor Kalmanson's home, run from 8 to 13 feet. The corner of the SE wall inclines inward, so the setback is 8 at the bottom of the wall and 10 at the top
- *Height:* The top of the outer wall on the street side of the project is 15 feet above grade at the southeast corner of the structure. Behind it, the project curves inward and higher, reaching its highest point at 24 to 25 feet. At the point where the outer wall reaches its highest point of 24-25 feet, it has become part of the house. The front elevation facing the street is unchanged from the previous submittal. The grade will be raised several feet above the existing grade.
- *Square footage:* The footprint of the house is 5300 feet. If the count includes the areas that have 3 walls and a roof around them, the square footage gets up to 9050 square feet. For code purposes, the FAR is 0.45. That number does not count the interior courtyard area.
- *Landscaping:* The Planning Commission was concerned about landscaping. We have used certain native species placed in containers of different sizes, with smaller ones in the foreground, thus creating a tiering or layering effect. A row of fruitless olive trees will hide the eastern wall from the house above it (the Caringi residence). The maximum height for fruitless olive trees is 30 feet.

Committee discussion

The square footage has not been reduced. Applicants took some SF away from the edges but put it back on the inside.

If the landscape plan becomes part of the Exhibit A drawing, then applicants have an obligation to plant as indicated. But there is no Municipal Code requirement that the plantings be maintained.

Public discussion

None. (The neighbors most closely concerned, Kalmanson on the north and Caringi on the east were not present. They had been notified but were unable to attend due to the short notice.)

Motion by Emerson, second by Naegle: same as previous motion, which is reproduced on the agenda.

Findings cannot be made for a Site Development Permit or a Coastal Development Permit for Project No. 328415 as presented to the LJSPRC on 3/24/15. It is not compatible with the neighborhood in form, bulk and scale. In particular, the east side of the building envelope is incompatible with the neighboring structures. The size, form, and relationship of the proposed project will disrupt the architectural unity of the neighborhood.

Janie Emerson: the applicant has tweaked rather than edited the project. The bulk and scale of this project, as presented to us today, has not changed as requested by the Planning Commission. Because the mass and character of this project has essentially not changed from the last presentation, I have made the same Motion as at our last Meeting.

Laura Ducharme-Conboy: I like the efforts to bring it down and set it back. I am not uncomfortable with the west side. There is a lot of roof area, but other schools of architecture have used roofs to function almost as part of a wall, an example being the French Mansard roofs. I don't think the courtyard square footage should be included. I will not be going with the motion.

Myrna Naegle: The square footage is unchanged and the height of the walls is unchanged: the bulk and scale of the residence violates the LJSPDO.

Donovan: I like the architecture of the house. Neighborhoods cannot remain static - they necessarily change over time. However, the change should be gradual, not dramatic or wrenching- this is the point that the LJSPDO makes when it refers to not disrupting the architectural unity of a neighborhood. I will vote in favor of the motion.

Merten: The FAR of 0.45 stated by the presenter is misleading in that it does not include the area and volume of the courtyard, which contributes greatly to the mass and bulk of the project. The ghost floor area of two levels of courtyard should be included in the square footage count because the heights of the wall and building walls surrounding the courtyard are 15 feet and more in height. In my opinion the mass and bulk of the proposed structure is simply too large for this site and the immediate neighborhood. I support the motion.

The motion passes 3-2-1.

In favor are Emerson, Naegle and Donovan. Opposed are DuCharme-Conboy and Steck. Chair Phil Merten abstains.

The Committee adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Dolores A. Donovan.