

September 2, 2020

THE WALNUT CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

A regular meeting of the Walnut City Planning Commission (PC) was held on the above-referenced date. Chairperson Koo called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

**FLAG SALUTE:** Commissioner Fernandez

**ROLL CALL:** Commissioner(s): Dy, Koo, Fernandez, Perez, Wang

**ALSO PRESENT:** Assistant City Manager – Development Services Tom Weiner; City Planner Justin Carlson; Assistant City Attorney David Mann; City Engineer Dave Gilbertson; Senior Planner Chris Vasquez; Senior Management Analyst Joelle Guerra; Associate Planner Chun-Chien Yang; Code Enforcement Specialist Alyssa Ramos; Community Development Technician Gabriel Katigbak.

**CORONAVIRUS DISEASE (COVID-19) ADVISORY:**

C/Koo presented information regarding the California State Department of Health Services' guidance and the County of Los Angeles Public Health Officer's order for the Control of COVID-19. Additionally, C/Koo informed all Attendees of the necessary procedures when submitting public comments.

**ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:**

C/Koo opened Oral Communications for Public Comment(s).

CDT/Katigbak noted that Staff had received eleven (11) written correspondences; one (1) related to Item #2, nine (9) for Item #3, and one (1) for Item #4. CDT/Katigbak, further noted that all Commissioners were provided a copy via email.

C/Koo noted that Oral Communications is for items not on the Agenda.

C/Koo closed Oral Communications for Public Comment(s).

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

1. August 5, 2020 (Regular Meeting Minutes).

**MOTION ON ITEM 2**

PC/Perez moved to approve the minutes of the regularly scheduled PC meeting of August 5, 2020. VC/Fernandez seconded.

**ROLL CALL:**

**AYES:** Koo, Fernandez, Dy, Perez, Wang  
**NOES:** None  
**ABSTAIN:** None  
**ABSENT:** None

Motion passed 5-0.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

**2. Mitigated Negative Declaration (Addendum):** A request to recommend City Council approval of an addendum to the previously approved Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the adjacent residential project at 780 and 808 Francesca Drive (APN's: 8732-026-170/169) residential project.

**Francesca Specific Plan (SP) [Amendment 1]:** A request to recommend City Council approval of an amendment to the existing Francesca Specific Plan (Specific Plan 2018-01).

**Vesting Tentative Tract Map (VTTM) 82852:** A request to recommend City Council approval for the subdivision of one (1) developed lot (approximately 0.79 acres) into thirteen (13) attached residential dwelling units (APN: 8735-026-015).

**Site Plan Case/Architectural Review (SPC/AR) 2019-079:** A request to recommend City Council approval of the demolition of the existing auto-repair center and to construct thirteen (13) attached dwelling units and additional site improvements at 788 Francesca Drive (APN: 8735-026-015).

**Development Agreement (DA):** A request to recommend City Council approval for a DA at 788 Francesca Drive (APN: 8735-026-015).

AP/Yang presented the Staff Report.

VC/Fernandez inquired that no modifications are being proposed to the previously approved development project located on 780 and 808 Francesca Drive and that modifications are proposed only for the subject parcel to comply with the previously adopted Francesca SP.

AP/Yang confirmed that there are no modifications to the adjacent parcels, but an Amendment to the SP regarding a reduction to the front setback is proposed.

C/Koo clarified that the SP Amendment consists of two (2) changes (the front yard setback and lot coverage) and further asked for clarification on the permitted density for the subject site.

AP/Yang mentioned the project's consistency with the previously approved plans located at 780 and 808 Francesca Drive in terms of design.

The Commission and Staff discussed the adjacent preschool site as well as connectivity and permitted density of the previously approved projects located at 780 and 808 Francesca Drive.

**C/Koo opened the item for Public Comment(s).**

Applicant/Feng Xiao introduced the Project and explained the difficulty in connecting 780 and 788 Francesca Drive due to American's with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements and the existing topography. Ms. Xiao also noted the attempt made by the property owner to acquire the adjacent lot in which a preschool is located.

The Commission and Applicant discussed the connectivity complications in terms of grading, proposed retaining wall(s), elevation, parking spaces, and amenities related to the Home Owner's Association (HOA).

C/Koo asked if 780 and 788 Francesca have a grade difference in relation to the subject property.

Ms. Xiao confirmed that 788 Francesca is at a lower grade.

The Commission, Staff, and Applicant further discussed the Development's proposed density and how it relates to ADA and internal open space.

C/Koo inquired about the Walnut Hills SP and its relation to the Francesca SP.

ACM/Weiner explained that both SP(s) will work in conjunction in order to allow for more density and mixed-use within this area of the City.

The Commission and Staff further discussed the SP for the entire Walnut Hills area and its future development.

C/Koo shared concerns regarding on-street parking for Francesca Drive.

**C/Koo closed the item for Public Comment(s).**

Ms. Xiao noted that unit(s) nine (9) and ten (10) have one (1) additional bedroom in order to accommodate the market, but can be reduced to three (3) bedrooms (total) for each unit.

PC/Perez shared his thoughts on the Project regarding design consistency, the garages being placed inward, and connectivity between all three (3) parcels since there will be different HOAs for each.

VC/Fernandez stated no concerns with overall connectivity. However, he would like a COA placed that the owner/HOA payee does not contribute to the HOA of another parcel other than in the one (1) that the resident resides. VC/Fernandez further noted support for a pedestrian ramp, however the difficulties in reaching ADA compliance for that ramp is understandable.

PC/Dy noted no issues with the architecture but shared his concerns related to density, no inter-parcel connectivity, proposed walkways within the parcel, and having a separate HOA for each parcel.

C/Koo shared his concerns with the proposed Project's variation to the existing standards within the SP and the placement of parking within the development.

PC/Wang identified a potential parking issue within this parcel with only seven (7) guest parking spaces being proposed.

The Commission and Staff discussed over-night parking within the entire City and the possibility of limiting parking on Francesca Drive.

C/Koo asked for clarification on the Motion for each item listed on the Agenda.

ACA/Mann noted that all five (5) items listed could be made as one (1) motion.

The Commission further discussed parcels 708, 788, and 808 as three (3) separate development/parcels.

**MOTION ON ITEM 2**

PC/Perez motioned to approve PC Resolution No. 20-09, 20-10, 20-11, and 20-12, with the additional Condition that units nine (9) and ten (10) reduce the number of bedrooms from four (4) to three (3). VC/Fernandez seconded.

**ROLL CALL:**

**AYES:** Fernandez, Perez, Wang

**NOES:** Koo, Dy

**ABSTAIN:** None

**ABSENT:** None

**Motion passed 3-2.**

**3. Tentative Tract Map (TTM) No. 74221 (Camelback):** A proposal to subdivide approximately 5.4 acres into fourteen (14) lots for a residential development located at the northerly portion of Camelback Drive (APNs: 8712-012-013/014/015/016/017 & 018).

CP/Carlson presented the Staff Report.

VC/Fernandez asked if the Applicant was aware that the Project was incomplete.

CP/Carlson confirmed that the Applicant was sent multiple status letters from Staff, requesting additional information. However, the Applicant requested that the project be placed before the Commission, as submitted.

ACA/Mann confirmed the project is incomplete.

C/Koo restated the materials needed for a proper approval by the PC. For example, the approvals required from applicable agencies, a possible Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR), and an Initial Study (IS).

PC/Dy asked for confirmation that the Project is currently six (6) lots with the proposal to subdivide into fourteen (14) Lots.

CP/Carlson confirmed that was correct.

**C/Koo opened the item for Public Comment(s).**

Project Engineer/John Wayne noted the on-site grading was reduced as much as possible and the retaining walls were reduced in overall height. Mr. Wayne mentioned that the Applicant would like clear direction on the documentation needed for Staff's review and continuation of the Project.

The Commission and Applicant further discussed the materials needed to fully analyze the Project.

C/Koo inquired about the proposed off-site remedial grading.

Mr. Wayne confirmed that the Owner of the subject site owns the three (3) adjacent lots where the off-site remedial grading is proposed.

Staff noted that the City owns one (1) lot adjacent to the site.

PC/Dy inquired about the proposed caissons located to the north of the subject site, in proximity to the residences on Shadow Mountain Road.

CP/Carlson confirmed that the caissons are not located on the subject site and additional entitlements would be needed in order to allow the grading at those sites, similar to the Terraces project located on the 49-acre site.

Resident/David Christie stated his concern for the Project related to the potential effects on the existing properties located on Buckland Drive, Shadow Mountain Road, and Camelback Drive. Mr. Christie noted that current conditions on these properties with the foundations, doors, and walls are already damaged from the previous landslide in the 1970s. Mr. Christie further explained the current state of the soil in that neighborhood.

Resident(s): Brad McCown, Debbi Ly, Jim Cao, Aaron Peterson, and Robbie Maldonado spoke individually on their concerns with the Project. Concerns stated include:

- Current state of vehicular traffic off Collegewood Drive;
- The shifting of the neighborhood (due to the current state of soils) off Shadow Mountain Road;
- The impact to neighbors of installing future Infrastructure, such as street construction, plumbing, sewer, etc.;
- Potential effects from grading on future, proposed homes, and walls;
- The current state of the land/slope;
- The proposed extension of the existing Camelback Drive cul-de-sac;
- The type machinery to be used to develop the subject property;
- The effects of the Project to the existing wildlife.

**C/Koo closed the item for Public Comment(s).**

C/Koo mentioned the insufficient data submitted in order to support the proposed Project and the history of the site.

PC/Dy noted his concern with the proposed remedial off-site grading when permission has not been granted to the Applicant by the individual owners.

PC/Perez commented on the landslide history in the area and noted the instructions given by Staff to the Applicant for the requirements needed to review the project thoroughly.

**MOTION ON ITEM 3**

**PC/Perez motioned to deny TTM No. 74221 based on non-compliance with the Walnut General Plan (WGP) and Walnut Municipal Code (WMC). PC/Dy seconded.**

**ROLL CALL:**

**AYES:** Koo, Fernandez, Dy, Perez, Wang  
**NOES:** None  
**ABSTAIN:** None  
**ABSENT:** None

Motion passed 5-0.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**4. Continued from the August 5, 2020 - Site Plan Case/ Architectural Review (SPC/AR) 2019-085 and 2020-032:** A request to construct 290 residential units, up to 20,000 square-feet of commercial building(s), other related improvements, and a request for a Sign Program for "The Terraces" development.

PC/Wang excused herself from the Item due to her residence being in close proximity to the subject site.

SMA/Guerra presented the Staff Report.

VC/Fernandez inquired about a correspondence that was received by a resident that stated that the SP calls out for a sidewalk around Valley Boulevard, heading towards the City of Pomona.

SMA/Guerra confirmed that the sidewalk along Valley Boulevard was discussed in the draft Initial Study in 2018, but the Final Tract Map and EIR, [that was adopted by City Council (CC)] did not include sidewalks.

VC/Fernandez asked if any discussion was made for the sidewalks to be installed along Valley Boulevard.

SMA/Guerra stated no formal discussion was made.

PC/Dy asked if Valley Boulevard is a Los Angeles (LA) County or City road.

CE/Gilbertson noted that LA County maintains roads with various jurisdictions that abut Valley Boulevard.

The Commission and Staff further discussed sidewalk feasibility along Valley Boulevard and the impact to height change of the proposed wall along Valley Boulevard.

PC/Perez noted that a sidewalk going west seems more likely versus a sidewalk going east along Valley Boulevard.

CE/Gilbertson confirmed that there is connectivity from this Development along the westerly portion towards Grand Avenue.

ACM/Weiner explained that connectivity is implemented throughout the Development. ACM/Weiner also noted that within Pomona's General Plan (GP), sidewalks in that area (east of the proposed development) are listed as least significant; therefore, Staff focused on connectivity west of the project, towards Grand Avenue.

CE/Gilbertson reiterated that the existing Snowcreek Development and equestrian lots (off Roundup Drive) have no sidewalk connectivity and the land uses further east of the Development leads to no ultimate destination.

VC/Fernandez asked if in the future, a sidewalk could be constructed with how the Development is proposed.

CE/Gilbertson confirmed that modified engineering might be needed; however, it can be done depending on ADA accessibility and associated cost.

The Commission and Staff further discussed a potential sidewalk.

CE/Gilbertson asked for clarification on whether the Commission wanted a redesign for a future sidewalk, or for the Applicant to install the sidewalk within the current proposal.

VC/Fernandez indicated that both options are suitable.

CE/Gilbertson explained that connectivity to neighboring jurisdiction(s) is incomplete throughout the City.

VC/Fernandez further shared his support for the sidewalk.

PC/Dy reiterated the need for a sidewalk east of the development.

**C/Koo opened the item for Public Comment(s).**

Applicant/John Moreland explained the future of connectivity towards the east and implemented connectivity towards the Snowcreek Shopping Center. Mr. Moreland further noted the development on the southside of Valley Boulevard and the pedestrian crossing being incorporated into the proposed Development. Mr. Moreland further reiterated the existing state of Valley Boulevard going east and the complications of incorporating the sidewalk due to the SP.

Applicant/Tracey Raszewski spoke on sidewalk connectivity going west into Walnut and referenced the Tract Map that was previously approved in 2019.

The Commission and Applicant further described the exhibits provided by the Applicant, as it relates to the mechanically stabilized earth (MSE) wall.

PC/Dy explained that the area needed to be re-designed in order to allow for a sidewalk in the future.

C/Koo asked the Applicant for clarification if a sidewalk is feasible.

The Commission and Applicant further discussed the feasibility of a sidewalk and the options made available for review. The options included additional remedial grading, increased cubic yards of dirt exported, and higher MSE Walls.

PC/Dy mentioned minimizing the City's expense for a future sidewalk.

VC/Fernandez agreed with PC/Dy

C/Koo asked if there are any concerns with engineering to increase the height of the wall from twenty-five (25') feet to twenty-eight (28') feet in overall height.

Ms. Raszewski explained that the amount of exported dirt will increase, and an additional environmental review will have to be conducted due to the previous EIR limiting the wall to no more than twenty-five (25') feet in height.

CE/Gilbertson noted that a twenty-eight and a half (28'-5") foot wall (exposed) could be built with additional remedial grading and long/stronger fabric in order to stabilize the wall.

ACA/Mann asked if the SP permits a twenty-five (25') foot high wall.

SMA/Guerra confirmed the SP only allows for a twenty-five and six (25'-6") inch wall.

ACA/Mann confirmed that an SP Amendment would need to be made.

The Commission, Applicant, and Staff further discussed the outcome of increasing the wall height with regards to Building Code, a redesign, increased grading, and damage to the existing catch basin.

C/Koo commented on the distance to the curb from the base of the wall being ten (10') feet on the previous proposal versus the current proposal having an additional seven (7') to eight (8') feet at various locations.

The Commission and Applicant further discussed the exhibit provided to demonstrate the wall height and slope of the Project.

PC/Dy reiterated that the site should be graded and designed in such a way that a future sidewalk is easy to install at minimal cost to the City.

Ms. Raszewski indicated that options could be provided to keep the Project in compliance with the SP and for the City to install a sidewalk in the future.

VC/Fernandez suggested maintaining the existing proposed slope from the MSE wall to the public right-of-way, which would not exceed the export or the exposed face.

The Commission and Staff discussed the redesign the Project needed in order to allow for the option of the sidewalk.

Resident/Shelly Rzonca noted the improvements needed that should be required for all projects and echoed the letter she submitted to the Commission.

C/Koo inquired if engineering is still required to determine the best option for the sidewalk and if the SP will need to be amended to allow for the twenty-eight (28') foot high wall.

ACM/Weiner confirmed that was correct.

ACA/Mann indicated that the Commission previously approved the TTM and DA and explained that during an SPC/AR, a request to amend the SP for aesthetics is uncommon.



The Commission and Staff further discussed the projects required entitlements.

CE/Gilbertson suggested that Option "A", on the exhibit provided by the Applicant, be slightly modified by deepening the wall and constructing a 3:1; slope to allow for a potential sidewalk at a future date. Such a modification would not require amending the SP. CE/Gilbertson further noted that additional engineering and remedial grading would be needed to accomplish this.

The Commission, Staff, and Applicant further discussed Option "A" and a valid motion for the project.

PC/Dy recommended the following COA:

- Incorporate Option "A", with the wall-face being engineered to allow for a future sidewalk on flat area, within the public right-of-way. If the ACM and/or CE deem it not feasible and not in compliance with the SP, the final grade and wall design will be constructed in such a way as to allow for future grading of a sidewalk, to be done by the City with minimal effort.

C/Koo noted the other concerns made at the previous PC Meeting were addressed:

- The fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) bedroom option was removed;
- Additional color schemes for the townhome option were made available.

The Commission further discussed their thoughts on the project.

C/Koo closed the item for Public Comment(s).

**MOTION ON ITEM 4**

PC/Dy motioned to approve SPC/AR 2019-085 and 2020-032 with the COA to incorporate Option "A", with the wall-face being engineered to allow for a future sidewalk on flat area, within the public right-of-way. If the ACM and/or CE deem it not feasible and not in compliance with the SP, the final grade and wall design will be constructed in such a way as to allow for future grading of a sidewalk, to be done by the City with minimal effort. VC/Fernandez seconded.

**ROLL CALL:**

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

Motion passed 4-0.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

None

**DISCUSSION/TRANSACTION:**

None

**REPORTS AND COMMENTS:**

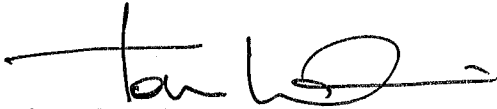
None

**ADJOURNMENT:**

The Meeting adjourned at 11:11 p.m. The next Planning Commission Meeting is set for a regular Meeting on Wednesday, October 7, 2020, at 7:00 pm via teleconference. The Agenda will be posted on the City's website and at public facilities, including Walnut City Hall (21201 La Puente Road).  
Passed and Approved on this 7<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2020.



Chairperson, Tony Koo



Tom Weiner, Assistant City Manager – Development Services