

Council Meeting of
February 7, 2006

Honorable Mayor and Members
of the City Council
City Hall
Torrance, California

PUBLIC HEARING

Members of the Council:

SUBJECT: Continued City Council consideration of an appeal of a Planning Commission approval of a Precise Plan of Development to allow first and second story additions to an existing one-story, single family residence on property located in the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 zone at 2710 Ridgeland Road.

PRE05-00032: Mr. and Mrs. Chris Benoit (Greg Schneider)

RECOMMENDATION

The Community Development Director and the Planning Commission recommend that the City Council deny the appeal and adopt a **RESOLUTION** to approve as conditioned, a Precise Plan of Development to allow the construction of first and second story additions to an existing single family residence on property located in the Hillside Overlay District, in the R-1 zone at 2710 Ridgeland Road.

ANALYSIS

This item was continued from the meeting of December 13, 2005, to allow the applicant additional time to modify the design to address concerns about the Floor Area Ratio. The applicant has reduced the second floor by eliminating one bedroom which results in a reduction of 205 square feet. This reduces the floor area ratio from .58 as conditioned by the Planning Commission to .56. The height was reduced by one foot nine inches from 26 feet nine inches to 25 feet by reducing the plate heights on each floor. The first story of the new residence will contain a kitchen, dining room, family room, a bedroom and bathroom. The second story will contain two bedrooms, a bathroom, laundry facilities and a master suite with a balcony on the rear elevation. A second balcony will be located on the easterly (street facing) elevation of the home. A project summary is provided below:

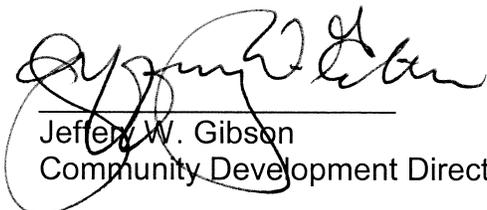
◆ Lot Area	5,295	square feet
◆ Existing First Floor	1,022	square-feet
◆ New First Floor	262	square-feet
◆ New Second Floor	1,239	square-feet
◆ New Garage	451	square feet
◆ Total Area	2,974	square-feet
◆ Floor Area Ratio	0.561	

With the elimination of the bedroom, a second story window on the north side of the house was also eliminated. The revised design increased the second story front setback which reduces the mass and bulk from the street and increases the air and light corridors for neighbors to the north. The revised design will maintain larger than required setbacks to provide a recreation yard area. The proposed design will feature finishes and architectural styling that are compatible with the character of the existing single family residences in the surrounding neighborhood. Additionally, it will not have a significant impact on the view, light, air or privacy of the surrounding properties; therefore, staff recommends approval of the project and denial of the appeal. Correspondence was received after the last Council meeting and is attached for your review.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeffery W. Gibson
Community Development Director

CONCUR:

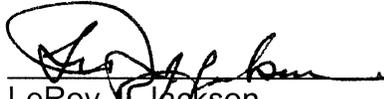


Jeffery W. Gibson
Community Development Director

By 

Jane Isomoto
Planning Manager

NOTED:



LeRoy Jackson
City Manager

Attachments:

- A. Resolution
- B. Correspondence (Limited Distribution)
- C. Excerpt of City Council Minutes of December 13, 2005
- D. Supplemental #1 to Council Agenda Item 12B
- E. Council Agenda Item 12B from Council Meeting of December 13, 2005
- F. Plot Plan, Floor Plan and Exterior Elevations (Limited Distribution)
- G. Mayor's Script (Limited Distribution)

RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE, CALIFORNIA, APPROVING A PRECISE PLAN OF DEVELOPMENT AS PROVIDED FOR IN DIVISION 9, CHAPTER 1, ARTICLE 41 OF THE TORRANCE MUNICIPAL CODE TO ALLOW FIRST AND SECOND STORY ADDITIONS TO AN EXISTING SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCE IN THE HILLSIDE OVERLAY DISTRICT IN THE R-1 ZONE AT 2710 RIDGELAND ROAD.

PRE05-00032: MR. AND MRS. CHRIS BENOIT (GREG SCHNEIDER)

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission of the City of Torrance conducted a public hearing on November 2, 2005, to consider an application for a Precise Plan of Development filed by Mr. and Mrs. Chris Benoit (Greg Schneider) to allow first and second story additions to an existing one story single-family residence on property located in the R-1 Zone within the Hillside Overlay District at 2710 Ridgeland Road; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Torrance conducted a public hearing on December 13, 2005, to consider an appeal of a Planning Commission approval of an application for a Precise Plan of Development filed by Mr. and Mrs. Chris Benoit (Greg Schneider) to allow first and second story additions to an existing one story single-family residence on property located in the R-1 Zone within the Hillside Overlay District at 2710 Ridgeland Road; and

WHEREAS, the item was continued to the meeting of February 7th, 2006;

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Torrance conducted a public hearing on February 7th, 2006, to consider an appeal of a Planning Commission approval of an application for a Precise Plan of Development filed by Mr. and Mrs. Chris Benoit (Greg Schneider) to allow first and second story additions to an existing one story single-family residence on property located in the R-1 Zone within the Hillside Overlay District at 2710 Ridgeland Road; and

WHEREAS, due and legal publication of notice was given to owners of property in the vicinity thereof and due and legal hearings have been held, all in accordance with the provisions of Division 9, Chapter 6, Article 2 of the Torrance Municipal Code; and

WHEREAS, single family residential properties are Categorically Exempted by the Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act; Article 19, Section 15303 (a); and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Torrance does hereby find and determine as follows:

- a) That the property is located at 2710 Ridgeland Road.
- b) That the property is identified as Lot 180 of Tract 20165.
- c) That the proposed additions will not have an adverse impact upon the view, light, air and privacy of other properties in the vicinity because the remodeled residence does not create a significant impact on any views as the immediate adjacent neighbors do not appear to have views over the proposed roof and the applicants have reduced the height by one foot nine inches since the first silhouette was constructed.
- d) That the proposed residence has been sited as far away from the front, side, and rear property lines as possible thereby maintaining view and light corridors for surrounding properties and the lowered height will reduce the massing of the overall structure. Additionally, the second story will be set back from the front property line 29 feet at the closest point.
- e) That the design provides an orderly and attractive development in harmony with other properties in the vicinity because the exterior design elements are in keeping with the architecture of the surrounding residences and high quality finishes will be used on the exterior.
- f) That the design will not have a harmful impact upon the land values and investment of other properties in the vicinity because the exterior will be treated with high-quality finishes and structural details equal to those of surrounding residences.
- g) That granting such application would not be materially detrimental to the public welfare and to other properties in the vicinity because a single-family residence is an appropriate use for this property. The proposed residence as conditioned will significantly upgrade the existing residence built in 1954, and will maintain compliance with the R-1 Zone and the Hillside Overlay District standards. Additionally, the proposed residence provides larger than required side and rear setbacks for recreation yard purposes.
- h) That the proposed residence would not cause or result in an adverse cumulative impact on other properties in the vicinity because the proposed new construction conforms to the Low-Density Residential Designation of the Land Use Element of the General Plan of the City of Torrance. Additionally, homes in the surrounding neighborhood have two stories and the proposed residence will be updated and compliant will all codes.
- i) That it is not feasible to increase the size of or to rearrange the space within the existing building or structure for the purposes intended except by increasing the height in order meet and exceed the Code required setbacks and preserve the rear yard outdoor recreation space. Additionally, a second story addition enables the subject property to maintain privacy for the adjacent properties to the southwest because the residence is 31 feet ten inches from the rear property line.
- j) That denial of such an application would result in an unreasonable hardship to the applicant because the proposed structure meets all Code requirements and it provides larger side and rear yard setbacks which increase the open space surrounding the proposed structure.
- k) That granting the application would not be materially detrimental to the public welfare and to other properties in the vicinity because the proposed residence

complies with all zoning development standards. The proposed residence will cause no additional hazards, including traffic or fire hazards, there are no anticipated view impacts on neighboring properties, and it will replace an aging structure with a Code compliant contemporary structure.

- l) That denial of this request to increase the interior floor area of the building to more than 50% of the lot area would constitute an unreasonable hardship because the lot is below the minimum lot size for an R-1 property. The proposed residence at its current square footage would not have a floor area ratio over 50% if the lot was the code required minimum size of 6,000 square feet. The proposed residence would have a floor area ratio of 0.49 on a standard size lot. The proposed residence has been designed to provide a rear yard recreation area and to maintain the required front yard setback which is also compatible with the neighboring properties. The proposed residence will comply with Code required setbacks and height restrictions in the R-1 zone.
- m) That granting this request to increase the interior floor area of the building to more than 50% of the lot area would not be detrimental to the public welfare and to other properties in the vicinity because the proposed total floor area is compatible with other properties in the neighborhood. The oversize garage contributes to the floor area ratio and provides the property owner with enclosed storage space. The staircase also contributes to the floor area ratio and the second floor enables the applicants to maintain a large rear yard recreation area and larger than required setbacks. Finally, the proposed residence has been designed with high quality finishes and architectural designs that reduce bulk and massing and will create an attractive, orderly development in harmony with the other properties in the vicinity. The larger than required setbacks will maintain air and light corridors and the residence will maintain an appearance from the street that is compatible with other surrounding residences.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that PRE05-00032, filed by Mr. and Mrs. Chris Benoit (Greg Schneider) to allow the construction of first and second story additions to an existing one story single family residence with an attached two car garage on property located in the R-1 Zone within the Hillside Overlay District at 2710 Ridgeland Road, on file in the Community Development Department of the City of Torrance, is hereby APPROVED subject to the following conditions:

1. That the use of the subject property for a single-family residence shall be subject to all conditions imposed in Precise Plan of Development 05-00032 and any amendments thereto or modifications thereof as may be approved from time to time pursuant to Section 92.28.1 et seq. of the Torrance Municipal Code on file in the office of the Community Development Director of the City of Torrance; and further, that the said use shall be established or constructed and shall be maintained in conformance with such maps, plans, specifications, drawings, applications or other documents presented by the applicant to the Community Development Department and upon which the Planning Commission relied in granting approval;
2. That if this Precise Plan of Development 05-00032 is not used within one year after granting of the permit, it shall expire and become null and void unless extended by

the Community Development Director for an additional period as provided for in Section 92.27.1;

3. That the maximum height of the residence at the highest point of the roof shall not exceed a height of 25 feet above the lowest adjacent grade of 101.80 based on a bench mark elevation of 100.23 located at the northerly corner of the property as shown on the official survey map on file in the Community Development Department; (Modified by Planning Commission)
4. That the height of the structure shall be certified by a licensed surveyor/engineer prior to requesting a framing or roof-sheathing inspection and shall not exceed 25 feet based on the elevation 101.80 and based on the benchmark elevation of 100.23 as shown on the survey map on file in the Community Development Department; (Modified by Planning Commission)
5. That the proposed floor area shall be .56 percent of the lot area which results in a total of 2,974 gross square feet as represented by the plans provided for the February 7th meeting; (Development Review)
6. That the second story windows in the west facing bathroom shall be opaque; (Added by Planning Commission)
7. That no more than one outdoor light fixture shall be placed at the southeast corner of the proposed residence; (Added by Planning Commission)
8. That applicant shall provide minimum 4" address numbers; (Environmental)

Introduced, approved and adopted this 7th day of February, 2006.

MAYOR, of the City of Torrance

ATTEST:

City Clerk of the City of Torrance

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

JOHN FELLOWS III, City Attorney

By _____