

**CITY OF SAN FERNANDO  
PLANNING COMMISSION**

**MINUTES OF AUGUST 2, 2011, MEETING - 7:00 P.M.  
CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBER**

THE FOLLOWING MINUTES ARE A SUMMARY OF ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION. AUDIO OF THE ACTUAL MEETING ARE AVAILABLE FOR LISTENING IN THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT.

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Julie Cuellar at 7:05 P.M.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Led by Commissioner Alvin Durham

**ROLL CALL**

The following persons were recorded as present:

**PRESENT:** Chairperson Julie Cuellar, Vice-chair Mario Rodriguez, Commissioners Alvin F. Durham, and Jose Ruelas

**ABSENT:** Robert Montañez

**ALSO PRESENT:** City Planner Fred Ramirez, Assistant Planner Edgar Arroyo, and Assistant Planner Rina Lara

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Commissioner A. Durham moved to approve the agenda of August 2, 2011. Seconded by Vice-chair M. Rodriguez, the motion carried with the following vote:

<b>AYES:</b>	A. Durham, M. Rodriguez, J. Cuellar, and J. Ruelas
<b>NOES:</b>	None
<b>ABSENT:</b>	R. Montañez
<b>ABSTAIN:</b>	None

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

A) Approval of Minutes of Planning and Preservation Commission Meeting minutes of the April 5, 2011; and

B) Approval of Minutes of the Planning and Preservation Commission Meeting minutes of the April 26, 2011

Vice-chair M. Rodriguez moved to approve the minutes. Seconded by Commissioner J. Ruelas, the motion carried with the following vote:

<b>AYES:</b>	M. Rodriguez, J. Ruelas, J. Cuellar, and A. Durham
<b>NOES:</b>	None
<b>ABSENT:</b>	None
<b>ABSTAIN:</b>	None

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None

**PUBLIC HEARING 7A:**

**Variance 2011-05 (VAR 2011-05) – 323-333 Hagar Street, San Fernando, CA – Park Chapel AME Church c/o: Torres Development Group, 28 North Marengo Avenue, Pasadena, CA 91101 – The**

**applicant is requesting a variance from City Code Section 106-970 (a) (1) regarding applicable development standards for fence height along the front yard setback. Specifically, the variance would allow for the construction of a new six feet high wrought iron style fence within the front yard set-back area of an existing surface parking facility that will be used for parking and recreational uses associated with the operation of a middle school on an adjacent property at 1218 Fourth Street. The subject site is an approximate 21, 375 square foot lot within the R-3 (Multiple-Family) zone and within the Redevelopment Project Area No. 3.**

\*Robert Montañez arrived at 7:09 p.m.\*

#### **STAFF PRESENTATION**

Assistant Planner Rina Lara gave the staff presentation recommending that the Planning and Preservation Commission approve Variance 2011-05, pursuant to Planning and Preservation Commission Resolution 2011-07 and the conditions of approval attached as Exhibit "A" to the resolution.

#### **COMMISSION DISCUSSION**

J. Ruelas asked if there would be a sliding gate.

F. Ramirez indicated that there would be three openings that will be closed when the school is not in session.

R. Montañez asked what the original part of the fencing has been approved by the Planning and Preservation Commission.

F. Ramirez explained that a six foot high fence in the rear and on the sides were part of the original application submitted.

R. Montañez asked what materials would be used for the proposed fencing.

F. Ramirez indicated that the applicant is proposed tubular galvanized steel that will have a silver finish that will match what is currently on site.

R. Montañez asked if the commission would consider an additional buffer to the fence such as a creeping vine to give it a softer look.

F. Ramirez explained that the commission could suggest a vegetative screening along the fence but that he would caution against it since the vehicles will be exiting along Hagar and would be concerned with obstruction of pedestrian view if the hedge were to be taller than three feet.

J. Ruelas stated that he like the idea of the vegetative hedges but has some concerns the opening and closing of the fence without the hedges obstructing the way.

F. Ramirez suggested a small landscape strip in front of the fence adjacent to the sidewalk and that way the mechanical equipment would be inside of the fence.

J. Cuellar stated that the fence is needed for the safety of the children who will be using the playground area. She asked staff to clarify the different entrances to the school.

R. Montañez restated that he feels that the fence along Hagar needs some type of vegetation to mimic the surrounding residential neighborhood and enhance the parking lot.

M. Rodriguez stated that the vegetative hedge needs to wrap around the entire fence on Hagar Street and along Fourth Street.

F. Ramirez stated that a vegetative screening can be accomplished with landscape pockets with creeping vine that can be trained by using either cables or fencing material attached to the back of the fence that won't be difficult to maintained.

R. Montañez stated that he likes the method used at the Gas Company. He just feels that the location needs to be softened considering that there are no trees on that lot, he feels that taking four parking stalls will not impact the parking at the site.

A. Durham stated that he doesn't feel that the school is concerned with losing parking spaces he feels that they are concerned with losing play area.

R. Montañez stated that his preference would be for the fence to be setback further from the sidewalk.

J. Ruelas asked staff to clarify what the different options were.

F. Ramirez explained that there are several options to consider;

Option 1: to approve the application as submitted, the fence would be installed adjacent to the sidewalk to match what is already there;

Option 2: To set the fence back along Hagar property 1-2 feet within the that area to install landscaping to match what already exist with is along Fourth Street; and

Option 3: Approve the project to allow the install of the six foot high fence with the condition that the applicant to install a landscape buffer between the fence and along the right-of-way edge between 1-2 feet setback. They would work with staff for the final design.

J. Cuellar asked if the school wanted to can they just decided not to install a fence at all.

F. Ramirez stated that the school could come in and apply for a fence permit and install a 3 foot front yard fence but they have applied for a variance because of the height.

A. Durham asked if they were any State regulations with requiring a security fence at the school site?

F. Ramirez stated that he is unaware of any requirements.

## **PUBLIC TESTIMONY**

Jose Torres, Torres Development Group – He stated that if the fence is moved in it would require a reconfiguration of the parking lot because some spaces would be eliminated. He stated that the commission should consider that there are limited funding resources when making recommendations and that ultimately the property still belongs to AME church.

F. Ramirez explained that the applicant is proposing 28 parking spaces but based on the code and number of existing classrooms, only 24 spaces are needed for the operation of the school. Additionally he suggested insets

(notches) in the fence to accommodate bougainvilleas or creeping vine but that too can cause an obstruction of view. He stated that there are many ways to soften the look of the fence using vegetation.

Subsequent to discussion, Commissioner R. Montañez moved to approve Variance 2011-05 with the amended conditions for the applicant to work with staff on a landscape buffer between fence and right-of-way. Seconded by Commissioner J. Ruelas, the motion carried with the following vote:

<b>AYES:</b>	R. Montañez, J. Ruelas, J. Cuellar, A. Durham, and M. Rodriguez
<b>NOES:</b>	None
<b>ABSENT:</b>	None
<b>ABSTAIN:</b>	None

### **STAFF COMMUNICATIONS**

F. Ramirez provided the commission with an update regarding the green curb along First Street in front of Lighthouse Christian Center. He stated that the request does not have to go before the Traffic and Safety Commission and that Public Works will be notifying the church that the green curb will be eliminated and become regular parking spaces. Update on garage conversion inquiry from M. Rodriguez. Thanked staff for assisting with getting commission packets out on Thursday.

E. Arroyo provided an update to an inquiry from R. Montañez regarding a commercial vehicle parked in front of the courthouse. He informed the commission that it was reported to Code Enforcement. He can park in County lot for a fee during the day. If this becomes an on-going basis then we need to do some code revisions.

### **COMMISSION COMMENTS**

R. Montañez asked about 3/4 ton vehicles using N. Maclay Avenue.

A. Durham asked if there is code regulation with regards to fliers on cars and windshields.

F. Ramirez said that he would look at the code and would report back to the commission at their next regularly scheduled meeting.

### **PUBLIC STATEMENTS**

None

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Vice-chair M. Rodriguez moved to adjourn to September 7, 2011. Seconded by Commissioner J. Ruelas, the motion carried with the following vote:

<b>AYES:</b>	M. Rodriguez, J. Ruelas, J. Cuellar, A. Durham, and R. Montañez
<b>NOES:</b>	None
<b>ABSENT:</b>	None
<b>ABSTAIN:</b>	None

8:08 P.M.  
FRED RAMIREZ  
Planning Commission Secretary