

Regional Planning Commission Transmittal Checklist

Hearing Date
11/16/2016
Agenda Item No.
7

Project Number: R2013-01771-(5)
Variance No. RPPL2016001834
Case(s): Plot Plan No. 201300639
Environmental Assessment Case No. 201300152
Planner: Shaun Temple

- Project Summary
- Property Location Map
- Staff Analysis
- Draft Resolution / Draft Ordinance / 8.5x11 Map (ZC or PA)
- Draft Findings
- Draft Conditions + Other department letters of recommended conditions
- Previous CUP Conditions of Approval
- Burden of Proof Statement(s)
- Environmental Documentation (ND / MND / EIR)
- Correspondence
- Photographs
- Aerial Image(s)
- Land Use/Zoning Map
- Tentative Tract / Parcel Map
- Site Plan / Floor Plans / Elevations
- Exhibit Map
- Landscaping Plans
- Findings and conditions of Previous permit

Reviewed By: 



Department of Regional Planning
 320 West Temple Street
 Los Angeles, California 90012

PROJECT NUMBER
 R2013-01771-(5)

HEARING DATE
 November 16, 2016

REQUESTED ENTITLEMENTS
 Variance No. RPPL2016001834
 Plot Plan No. 201300639

PROJECT SUMMARY

OWNER / APPLICANT

Montrose Church of the Nazarene

MAP/EXHIBIT DATE

April 15, 2015

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The applicant requests a variance and director's review plot plan to authorize the 75-percent reduction in required vehicle parking spaces from 104 to 26 in conjunction with a proposal to demolish a single family residence at 3909 Orangedale Avenue to allow the expansion of an existing church at 2409 Florencita Avenue to include a new 1,600 square foot stage area as part of the main assembly area and 1,000 square feet of support space.

LOCATION

2409 Florencita Avenue, Montrose

ACCESS

Florencita Avenue

ASSESSORS PARCEL NUMBER(S)

5807-021-019, 5807-021-020, 5807-021-021, 5807-021-022, 5807-021-023

SITE AREA

0.73 Acres

GENERAL PLAN / LOCAL PLAN

General Plan

ZONED DISTRICT

Montrose

LAND USE DESIGNATION

H30 (Residential 30)

ZONE

R-3 (Limited Density Multiple Residential)

PROPOSED UNITS

None

MAX DENSITY/UNITS

N/A

COMMUNITY STANDARDS DISTRICT

La Crescenta-Montrose

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION (CEQA)

Pursuant to the California Public Resources Code Section 15270, the California Environmental Quality Act does not apply to projects which a public agency rejects or disapproves.

KEY ISSUES

- Consistency with the Los Angeles County General Plan
- Satisfaction of the following Section(s) of Title 22 of the Los Angeles County Code:
 - 22.56.290 (Variance Burden of Proof Requirements)
 - 22.44.139 (La Crescenta – Montrose CSD requirements)
 - 22.20.300, et seq. (R-3 Zone Development Standards)

CASE PLANNER:

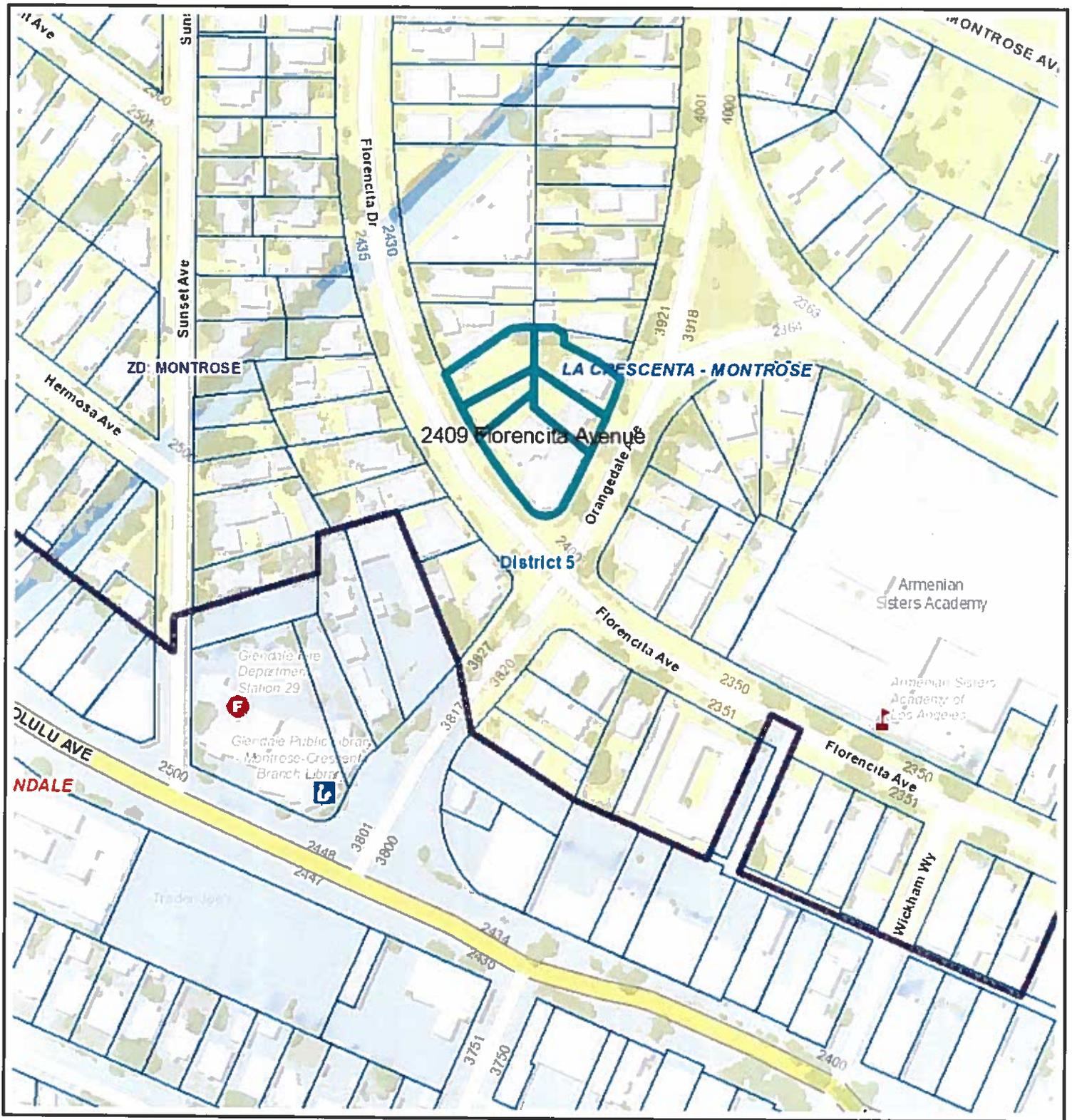
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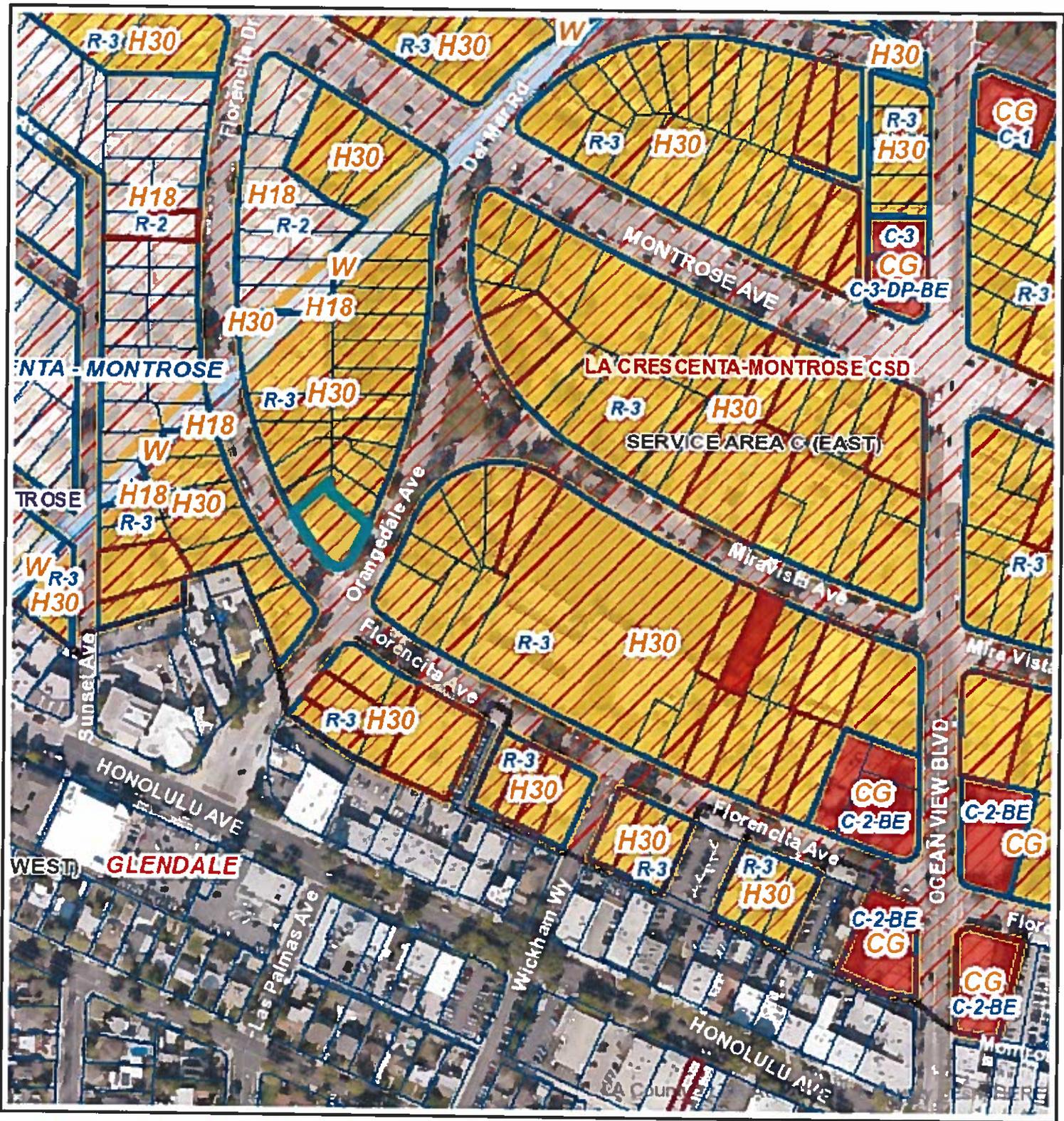


2409 Florencita Avenue Property Locations Map

Printed: Nov 02, 2016

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2409 Florencita Avenue Zoning Layers Map

Printed: Nov 03, 2016



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ENTITLEMENTS REQUESTED

- Variance to authorize the 75-percent reduction in required vehicle parking spaces from 104 to 26 for the expansion of an existing church in the R-3 Zone pursuant to County Code Section 22.56.260
- Director's Review Plot Plan for the expansion of an existing church, which includes a new 1,600 square foot stage area as part of the main assembly hall and 1,000 square feet of support space in the R-3 (Limited Density Multiple Residence) Zone pursuant to County Code Section 22.20.280.B

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project site is comprised of five adjoining parcels, which include the church (2409 Florencita Avenue), its parking lot, and two single family homes (3909 and 3913 Orangedale Avenue). The applicant, the Montrose Church of the Nazarene, is proposing to demolish a single family residence at 3909 Orangedale Avenue and expand the existing church located at 2409 Florencita Avenue into that area. The expansion consists of a new 1,600 square foot stage area as part of the main assembly area and 1,000 square feet of support space for offices and a classroom. The existing assembly area is 2,636 square feet. With the expansion, the total area for the main assembly hall will be 4,236 square feet.

The County's Division of Building and Safety calculates that the new assembly hall will have an occupancy load of 522 people. The parking requirement for a church is one space for every five people, therefore, for a church with an occupancy load of 522 people, the required parking is 104 parking spaces. The church is proposing to provide 26 parking spaces, which is 78 parking spaces (75 percent) less than the required parking. A reduction of greater than 50-percent of parking requires a variance.

In the R-3 Zone, a church is allowed with a director's review. The variance for the parking reduction and directors' review for the church expansion is subject to discretionary action by the Regional Planning Commission. Staff is recommending denial of the variance and the expansion. During community outreach, several neighbors stated that street parking is not available to them and their guests on Sundays during the hours of the four church services, and that there have been incidents of driveways being blocked by parked cars. Staff verified through a site inspection on a Sunday during church service hours that there was no available parking in the neighborhood. An expansion of the church along with an increase in its occupant load of the main assembly hall without providing additional parking is expected to lead to increased impacts to street parking and cause adverse parking conditions for residents in the area.

EXISTING ZONING

The subject property is zoned R-3 (Limited Density Multiple Residence).

Surrounding properties are zoned as follows:

North: R-3 and R-2 (Two Family Residence)

South: R-3 and City of Glendale (Commercially Developed)

East: R-3
West: R-3 and R-2

EXISTING LAND USES

The subject property is developed with an existing church and a single family residence.

Surrounding properties are developed as follows:

North: Single family and multi-family residences.

South: Single family and multi-family residences; commercial retail, restaurants, and services.

East: Single family and multi-family residences, and the Armenian Sisters Academy.

West: Single family and multi-family residences.

PREVIOUS CASES/ZONING HISTORY

Per Assessor's records, the western building now containing the support rooms was built in 1940 as a 2,184-square-foot small neighborhood church building.

A building permit from July 14, 1961 shows an approval for a second building, the eastern building where the main assembly hall of the church is now located.

Certificate of Compliance 92-0191 was approved on April 5, 1992 and includes a covenant to hold the five parcels as one.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

Pursuant to the California Public Resources Code Section 15270 "CEQA does not apply to projects which a public agency rejects or disapproves." Staff is recommending that this project be denied; therefore, the project qualifies for the, "Projects Which Are Disapproved" statutory exemption and an environmental document was not prepared for this project.

STAFF EVALUATION

General Plan/Community Plan Consistency

The project site is located within the H30 (Residential 0-30 dwelling units per acre) land use category of the General Plan. This designation is intended for single family residences, two family residences, and multifamily residences. A neighborhood church is a use commonly permitted in residential neighborhoods and is consistent with the permitted uses of the underlying land use category; however, the General Plan also encourages land use compatibility and developments that are compatible with community character and exiting conditions. The use should be at a neighborhood scale and what is being proposed is a church that is out of scale as demonstrated by the need for a parking variance.

Zoning Ordinance and Development Standards Compliance

Pursuant to Section 22.20.300, et seq. of the County Code, establishments in the R-3 Zone are subject to the following development standards:

- Height – the proposed expansion of the church will reach a height of 35-feet, which is the maximum height allowed.
- Front Yard Requirement – the front yard of the church, along Orangedale Avenue, is 15-feet, which is the required minimum front yard setback.
- Corner Side Yard – the side yard, along Florencita Avenue, is 7 ½ -feet, which is the required minimum for a reverse corner lot property.
- Rear Yard – the rear yard, which contains the church parking lot area, is approximately 105-feet, which meets the required minimum rear yard setback of not less than 15-feet.
- Parking – The project is proposing to provide 26 parking spaces, which is 78 fewer spaces than the minimum required 104 parking spaces. Church uses are required to provide one parking space for every five occupants of the main assembly hall as calculated by the County Engineer. The Division of Building and Safety calculated that the proposed 4,236-square-foot assembly hall has an occupant load of 522. This requires that 104 vehicle parking spaces be provided. The applicant is proposing to provide 26 parking spaces and is requesting a variance to reduce the required vehicle parking spaces by 75-percent.

The applicant submitted a parking contract for the nearby Armenian Sisters' Academy's parking lot, which has 95 spaces, for use on Sundays between 8:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. However, this parking contract is not guaranteed for any length of time and contains a clause that allows for either party for any reason to leave this contract with a given 6 month notice, which essentially makes this contract an on-going 6-month lease. In order to meet off-site parking requirement per the County Code, a contract with a minimum lease term of 20-years is required. Staff reached out to the Armenian Sisters' Academy to verify whether or not there was a parking contract in place and received an email stating that the church attempted to negotiate a long-term parking contract, but that the Academy did not want to enter into a long term lease and therefore no deal had been reached. In addition, the use of these 95-spaces is only good for a period of 6-months at a time and it only covers Sunday from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The church has Sunday services until 5:00 p.m. and the church has various on-site activities throughout the week. Therefore, the off-site parking lot would not be available outside of the limited window on Sundays. Without the off-site parking lot, the church has only 26 onsite parking spaces and the project does not meet the requirement for a parking permit.

Pursuant to Section 22.44.139 of the County Code, establishments in the La Crescenta-Montrose Community Standards District (CSD) are subject to the following development standards for projects in the R-3 Zone:

- Front yard –At least 50 percent of the front yard is required to be landscaped and at least one 15-gallon tree is also required. The entire front yard setback is landscaped with the exception of the pedestrian sidewalk. Two existing palm trees

located in front of the proposed area for expansion are proposed to remain. Therefore, the project meets the minimum requirement to provide at least 50-percent landscaping, including at least one minimum 15-gallon tree.

- Window – For each building that fronts a public street, at least one window shall be placed on the building's wall which faces that street. The proposed expansion does not provide a window that faces a public street as is required.
- Building Articulation – Building walls exceeding 30 feet in length shall be articulated by use of patios, balconies, and/or bay windows extending not less than three feet from the building wall. The building walls of the proposed expansion are not articulated by use of patios, balconies, and/or bay windows as is required.
- Pitched roof line – A pitched roofline shall be required along all sides of any building, with a slope of not less than 1:3. The proposed expansion has a primarily flat roof line and does not meet this requirement.

Site Visit

A site visit was conducted on October 30, 2016, during Sunday services. The church was maintained in good condition. Staff walked both Orangedale Avenue and Florencita Avenue and noted that there was no street parking available in the vicinity of the church.

Burden of Proof

The applicant is required to substantiate all facts identified by Section(s) 22.56.290 of the County Code. The applicant's Burden of Proof responses is attached. Staff is of the opinion that the applicant has not met the burden of proof.

Section 22.56.290 A. "That there are special circumstances or exceptional characteristics applicable to the property involved, such as size, shape, topography, location or surroundings, which are not generally applicable to other properties in the same vicinity and under identical zoning classification."

The project site is 31,641 square feet and on gently sloping topography, but other than the project site area there is no difference from other surrounding properties. Neighboring properties are zoned R-3. Lot sizes range from 6,000 to 8,000 square feet. These properties are also located on gently sloping topography and are developed with single-family and multi-family residences. The project has been developed as a church since 1940 and expanded to include a second building in 1961, but there are no special circumstances or exceptional characteristics applicable to the property, such as size, shape, topography, location or surrounding, that is not applicable to other properties in the area.

Section 22.56.290 B. "That such variance is necessary for the preservation of a substantial property right of the applicant such as that possessed by owners of other property in the same vicinity and zone."

The proposed project is for the expansion of an existing church. The property can continue to be used for a church even if the variance and expansion are denied. In addition, the property is zoned R-3 and can be developed for uses allowed in the zone in accordance with development standards required by the zone and use even without a variance; therefore, the approval of a variance and expansion of the existing use is not necessary to preserve substantial property right of the applicant.

Section 22.56.290 C. "That the granting of the variance will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or be injurious to other property or improvements in the same vicinity and zone."

During community outreach for this project, several neighbors have stated that there is a lack of parking for them and their guests on Sundays during the hours of the four church services, and that there have been incidents of driveways being blocked by parked cars. Staff verified through a site inspection on a Sunday during church service hours that there was no available parking in the neighborhood. Therefore, the expansion of the church and increase in the occupant load of the main assembly hall without providing additional parking would most likely lead to additional and increased impacts to street parking and cause adverse parking conditions for residents in the area.

Neighborhood Impact/Land Use Compatibility

The project is located in a residential neighborhood that is developed with a mix of multi-family and single-family homes. The Armenian Sisters' Academy, which is a private elementary school, is located approximately 500-feet to the east of the church. Honolulu Avenue, which is located one block to the south, is the "Main Street" of Montrose and its center of commercial activity with a variety of restaurants, shops, and commercial services. The Montrose Harvest Market is a Sunday farmers' market that shuts down the vehicle use and street parking along a portion of Honolulu Avenue from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. every Sunday, which overlaps with the four church services from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. There is also a Trader Joe's Super Market located one block away from the church that is known for having a consistently full on-site parking lot resulting in customers and employees parking off-site. The combination of these three factors leads to impacted on-street parking in the Florencita Avenue and Organgedale Avenue areas on Sundays. The expansion of the existing church without providing additional off-site parking would further exacerbate parking impacts in the neighborhood.

COUNTY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Los Angeles County Fire Department, in a letter dated January 8, 2013, cleared the project for public hearing stating that the fire flow test for the existing public fire hydrant near the northwest corner of Florencita Avenue and Orangedale Avenue is adequate for

this project and that the project provides the required 5-foot minimum walking path within 150 feet of all exterior portions of the building.

The Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, in a letter dated February 23, 2016, cleared the project for public hearing with conditions: close the unused driveway along Orangedale Avenue, reconstruct the common driveway for 3909 and 3913 Orangedale Avenue to meet ADA guidelines, and obtain all appropriate approvals from Public Works to complete these activities.

CRESCENTA VALLEY TOWN COUNCIL COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Representatives of Montrose Church attended the Crescenta Valley Town Council Land Use Committee meeting on June 13, 2013 to present the proposed project. The church's representatives stated that the project will add stage space to accommodate TV monitors for off-site viewing from remote locations, and will add 100 seats to the main assembly hall. Councilmembers and community members stated that the church was a good neighbor, but that parking was already a problem on Sundays and that many attendees do not park at the Armenian Sisters' Academy but on the street. The church responded that they will continue to educate the congregation to park at the Academy first and on the street second and that neighbors can reach out to the church if there are any problems. In a follow up meeting on September 19, 2013, the Crescenta Valley Town Council Land Use Committee voted 10-0 to write a letter in support of the Montrose Church's Parking Permit application. The Town Council voted and agreed to accept the Land Use Committee's recommendation.

The project was again presented to the Crescenta Valley Town Council Land Use Committee on June 2, 2016. The committee was given further information that the church did not have a long term lease agreement with the Armenian Sister's Academy as required by the parking permit. The church does not have a long term lease agreement of at least 20 years as required by the parking permit. The agreement they have can be terminated at any time for any reason with a 6-month notice. The current agreement also does not cover all hours of all activities at the church. Without the use of the off-site parking lot, the project needs a parking variance for a 75-percent parking reduction. During the meeting one neighbor stated that parking is already an issue in the neighborhood, the parking lot at the Armenian Sisters' Academy is not being used, and street parking in the neighborhood is occupied throughout Sunday as there are multiple services. Another neighbor stated that she has had problems with people blocking her driveway on Sundays while parking at curb side spaces without enough room. The neighbors voiced a concern that an expansion of the church will lead to greater parking problems. The committee members suggested creating a preferential parking district, but after discussion decided that was not the preferred option. The meeting was continued to July 7, 2016 with instructions for the church to propose possible solutions to the parking issue.

At the July 7, 2016 meeting, the church proposed to self-impose a maximum occupancy of 282 people. The Land Use Committee then voted to recommend approval of the variance with this condition. On July 21, 2016, the Crescenta Valley Town Council voted

unanimously to accept the Land Use Committee's recommendation for approval with a condition limiting occupancy. Staff is not in support of the recommended condition for a self-imposed maximum occupancy of 282 people as it would be difficult to monitor and enforce. Also, the occupancy load minus the requested 1,600 square foot expansion is already 415 people. The reason to expand the size of a church while reducing its occupancy load does not seem clear or necessary.

LEGAL NOTIFICATION AND PUBLIC OUTREACH

Pursuant to the provisions of Sections 22.60.174 and 22.60.175 of the County Code, the community was appropriately notified of the public hearing by mail, newspaper, property posting, library posting and DRP website posting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Neighbor Grace Chase stated that she does not belong to the church, but is a friend of the church because they belong to the community. She has worked with them at Special Olympics and support them because they support the community.

Neighbor Kerry Ventress stated that parking is the biggest concern. Many people do not park at the Armenian Sister's Academy, they park on the street. It is hard for the neighbors to have guests on Sundays because there is no street parking. She is concerned the parking situation is not being addressed.

Neighbor Dore Nathan, stated that he lives near the church and was quite concerned about the requested variance for parking. He stated the current parking situation is already a problem and if the church cannot provide the required parking spaces, the situation may become intolerable. The church is overall a good neighbor, but parking is an issue. Beginning before the first service, every parking spot in the neighborhood around the church is gone. As the first service ends the next wave arrives and again takes up every spot. He stated that the late comers are the worst and will park on the corner and block driveways. They believe the church has asked their congregants to park in the lot they borrow from the Armenians Sisters' Academy, but church goers will take an open spot if one is closer. In addition to Sunday services, the church hosts a summer program several days a week for months in the summer where they do not borrow the school lot and the neighborhood is jammed with cars all day. He stated that residents in the neighborhood have to plan their Sunday's carefully. If a resident loses a parking spot, they have to park blocks away until the afternoon. In addition, the neighborhood has many apartments with multiple families with limited parking already.

Neighbor Eileen Walsh stated that she would personally like to add on to her own property and would have to fulfill the requirement to add parking spaces on site, so why should the church not meet the same standard? She also stated that church members have parked in front of people's driveways, and she is concerned that the expansion will lead to bigger and more frequent events.

Neighbor Barb Harrison stated that some of the church events are very loud. One event went to around 9:30 p.m.

Cathleen Murphy, the owner of a neighboring apartment complex stated she is concerned that the parking variance will impact her tenants' ability to park on the streets and their guests' ability to park on the streets.

Sharon Raghavachary of the Crescenta Valley Community Association stated that the Association believes the requested variance for the 75-percent reduction in required vehicle parking spaces is inappropriate for a neighborhood already impacted by parking. The Crescenta Valley Community Association is a cross-jurisdictional, volunteer organization that represents the land use interests of the valley communities that are divided between four political divisions (County of Los Angeles, City of Glendale, City of La Canada, City of Los Angeles).

FEES/DEPOSITS

If approved, fees identified in the attached project conditions will apply unless modified by the Regional Planning Commission.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The following recommendation is made prior to the public hearing and is subject to change based upon testimony and/or documentary evidence presented at the public hearing:

Staff recommends **DENIAL** of Project Number R2013-01771-(5), Variance Number RPPL2016001834 and Site Plan Review RPP201300639.

SUGGESTED DENIAL MOTION:

I MOVE THAT THE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION DENY VARIANCE NUMBER RPPL2016001834 AND PLOT PLAN NUMBER 201400639 AND FIND THAT THE PROJECT QUALIFIES AS A STATUTORY EXEMPTION, PROJECTS WHICH ARE DISAPPROVED, PURSUANT TO STATE AND LOCAL CEQA GUIDELINES.

Prepared by Shaun Temple, Senior Regional Planning Assistant, Zoning Permits West Section

Reviewed by Mi Kim, Supervising Regional Planner, Zoning Permits West Section

Attachments:

Draft Findings,
Applicant's Burden of Proof statement
Correspondence
Site Photographs,
Site Plan, Land Use Map

MKK:sct
November 3, 2016

**DRAFT FINDINGS OF THE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
AND ORDER
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
PROJECT NO. R2013-01771-(5)
VARIANCE NO. RPPL2016001834
PLOT PLAN NO. 201300639**

1. The Los Angeles County ("County") Regional Planning Commission ("Commission") conducted a duly-noticed public hearing on November 16, 2016 and denied Project No. 2013-01771-(5), consisting of Variance No. RPPL2016001834 and Director's Review Plot Plan No. 201300639. (The variance and plot plan are referred to collectively as the "Project Permits.")
2. The permittee, Montrose Church of the Nazarene ("permittee"), requested the Project Permits to authorize the expansion of an existing church to include a 1,600 square foot addition to the main assembly hall in the form of a new stage area and for a 1,000 square feet in support space. This addition would have increased the total area for the main assembly hall to 4,236 square feet with an occupancy load of 522 people, which required 104 parking spaces. The applicant requested a variance to authorize a 75-percent reduction in required vehicle parking spaces from 104 spaces to 26 spaces. The project request also included the demolition of a single family residence at 3909 Orangedale Avenue to allow for the proposed expansion of the church. ("Project")
3. The Project is on a property located at 2409 Florencita Avenue in the unincorporated community of Montrose ("Project Site").
4. The Variance is a request to authorize the 75-percent reduction of vehicle parking spaces required from 104 spaces to 26 spaces as required for the proposed expansion of an existing church.
5. The Plot Plan is a request to demolish the single family residence at 3909 Orangedale Avenue and to expand the existing church at 2409 Florencita Avenue in the place of the former home with a 1,600 square foot addition to the main assembly hall in the form of a stage area and for 1,000 square feet in support space. Expansion of a church in the R-3 zone requires discretionary director's review pursuant to Los Angeles County Code ("County Code") Section 22.20.280.
6. The Project Site is 0.73 acres in size and consists of five parcels. The Project Site is irregular in shape with gentle-sloping topography and is developed with a church, its parking lot, and two single family residences.
7. The Project Site is located in the Montrose Zoned District and is currently zoned R-3 (Limited Density Multiple Residential).
8. The Project Site is located within the H30 (Residential 30) land use category of the General Plan Land Use Policy Map.

9. Surrounding Zoning within a 500-foot radius includes:

North: R-3 and R-2 (Two Family Residence)
South: R-3 and City of Glendale (Commercially Developed)
East: R-3
West: R-3 and R-2

10. Surrounding land uses within a 500-foot radius include:

North: Single family and multi-family residences.
South: Single family and multi-family residences; commercial retail, restaurants, and services.
East: Single family and multi-family residences, and the Armenian Sisters Academy.
West: Single family and multi-family residences.

11. Per Assessor's records, the western building now containing the support rooms was built in 1940 as the original church building. A building permit from July 14, 1961 shows an approval for a second building, the eastern building where the main assembly hall is now located. Certificate of Compliance 92-0191 from April 5, 1992 includes a covenant to hold the five parcels as one property in April 5, 1992.

12. The Project Site is accessible via Florencita Avenue and Orangedale Avenue.

13. Los Angeles County Building and Safety has calculated an occupant load of 522 people for the expanded assembly hall, which is 4,236 square feet. This requires 104 vehicle parking spaces. The applicant is proposing to provide 26 parking spaces and is requesting a variance to reduce the required vehicle parking spaces by 78 spaces or 75-percent.

14. Representatives of Montrose Church attended the Crescenta Valley Town Council Land Use Committee on June 13, 2013 to present the proposed project. The church's representatives stated that the project will add stage space to accommodate performances and video work to accommodate off-site viewing from remote locations and 100 seats will be added to the main assembly hall. Council members and community members stated that the church was a good neighbor, but that parking is already a problem on Sundays and that many people do not park at the Armenian Sisters' Academy (off-site parking lot) but on the street. The church responded that they will continue to educate the congregation to park at the Academy first and on the street second and that neighbors can reach out to the church if there are any problems. In a follow up meeting on September 19, 2013, the Crescenta Valley Town Council Land Use Committee voted 10-0 to write a letter in support of the Montrose Church's Parking Permit application. The Town Council voted and agreed to accept the Land Use Committee's recommendation.

The project was again presented to the Crescenta Valley Town Council Land Use Committee on June 2, 2016, because the project could not be processed as a parking

permit because the existing lease with the Armenian Sisters' Academy does not have a long term guarantee of at least 20 years and can be terminated at any time for any reason with a 6-month notice and does not cover all hours of all activities at the church and therefore a parking variance would be needed to approve the 75-percent reduction in vehicle parking spaces required. During the meeting one neighbor stated that parking is already an issue in the neighborhood. The parking lot at the Armenian Sisters' Academy is not being used and street parking in the neighborhood is occupied throughout Sunday as the church has multiple services. Another neighbor stated that she has had problems with people blocking her driveway on Sundays by cars parking at curb side spaces without enough room. The neighbors voiced a concern that an expansion of the church will lead to greater parking problems. One of the committee members suggested creating a preferential parking district but after discussion amongst the committee and with agreement with the neighbors, it was decided that was not the preferred option. The meeting was continued until July 7, 2016 with instructions for the church to propose possible solutions to the parking issue. During the July 7, 2016 meeting the church proposed to self-impose a maximum occupancy of 282 people. The Land Use Committee voted to recommend approval the variance with this condition. On July 21, 2016, the Crescenta Valley Town Council voted unanimously to accept the Land Use Committee's recommendation for approval with the self-limitation occupancy. Staff did not support the recommendation for a self-imposed maximum occupancy of 282 people as it would be difficult to monitor and enforce. Also, the occupancy load minus the requested 1,600 square foot expansion is already 415 people. The reason to expand the size of a church while reducing its occupancy load does not seem clear or necessary.

15. The Los Angeles County Fire Department, in a letter dated January 8, 2013, cleared the project for public hearing stating that the fire flow test for the existing public fire hydrant near the northwest corner of Florencita Avenue and Orangedale Avenue is adequate for this project and that the project maintains the minimum required 5-foot walking access to within 150 feet to all exterior portions of the building.
16. The Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, in a letter dated February 23, 2016, cleared the project for public hearing with the conditions to close the unused driveway along Orangedale Avenue, to reconstruct the common driveway that serves 3909 and 3913 Orangedale Avenue to meet ADA guidelines, and to obtain all appropriate approvals from Public Works to complete these activities.
17. Pursuant to the California Public Resources Code Section 15270, the California Environmental Quality Act does not apply to projects which a public agency rejects or disapproves. Therefore, the project qualifies as a Statutory Exemption (Projects Which Are Disapproved) and an environmental document was not prepared for the project.
18. Pursuant to the provisions of sections 22.60.174 and 22.60.175 of the Zoning Code, the community was appropriately notified of the Project's public hearings by mail, newspaper, and property posting.

19. The following seven comments were received from the public through phone calls and public meetings prior to the public hearing:

Neighbor Grace Chase stated that she does not belong to the church, but is a friend of the church because they belong to the community. She has worked with them at Special Olympics and support them because they support the community.

Neighbor Kerry Ventress stated that parking is the biggest concern. Many people do not park at the Armenian Sister's Academy, they park on the street. It is hard for the neighbors to have guests on Sundays because there is no street parking. She is concerned the parking situation is not being addressed.

Neighbor Dore Nathan, stated that he lives near the church and was quite concerned about the requested variance for parking. He stated the current parking situation is already a problem and if the church cannot provide the required parking spaces, the situation may become intolerable. The church is overall a good neighbor, but parking is an issue. Beginning before the first service, every parking spot in the neighborhood around the church is gone. As the first service ends the next wave arrives and again takes up every spot. He stated that the late comers are the worst and will park on the corner and block driveways. They believe the church has asked their congregants to park in the lot they borrow from the Armenians Sisters' Academy, but church goers will take an open spot if one is closer. In addition to Sunday services, the church hosts a summer program several days a week for months in the summer where they do not borrow the school lot and the neighborhood is jammed with cars all day. He stated that residents in the neighborhood have to plan their Sunday's carefully. If a resident loses a parking spot, they have to park blocks away until the afternoon. In addition, the neighborhood has many apartments with multiple families with limited parking already.

Neighbor Eileen Walsh stated that she would personally like to add on to her own property and would have to fulfill the requirement to add parking spaces on site, so why should the church not meet the same standard? She also stated that church members have parked in front of people's driveways, and she is concerned that the expansion will lead to bigger and more frequent events.

Neighbor Barb Harrison stated that some of the church events are very loud. One event went to around 9:30 p.m.

Cathleen Murphy, the owner of a neighboring apartment complex stated she is concerned that the parking variance will impact her tenants' ability to park on the streets and their guests' ability to park on the streets.

Sharon Raghavachary of the Crescenta Valley Community Association stated that the Association believes the requested variance for the 75-percent reduction in required vehicle parking spaces is inappropriate for a neighborhood already impacted by parking. The Crescenta Valley Community Association is a cross-

jurisdictional, volunteer organization that represents the land use interests of the valley communities that are divided between four political divisions (County of Los Angeles, City of Glendale, City of La Canada, City of Los Angeles).

20. [Reserved for Hearing Proceedings]

21. The Commission finds that the project site is located within the H30 (Residential 0-30 dwelling units per acre) land use category of the General Plan. This designation is intended for single family residences, two family residences, and multifamily residences. A neighborhood church is a use commonly permitted in residential neighborhoods and is consistent with the permitted uses of the underlying land use category; however, the General Plan also encourages land use compatibility and developments that are compatible with community character and existing conditions. The use should be at a neighborhood scale and what is being proposed is a church that is out of scale as demonstrated by the need for a parking variance and therefore the project is not consistent with the County General Plan.

22. The Commission finds that the project does not meet the development standards for the La Crescenta-Montrose Community Standards District, Section 22.44.139, which has building design standards for structures in the R-3 Zone to include the placement of a window on a wall that fronts a public street, that the wall facing the public street is articulated by use of patios, balconies, and/or bay windows, and that the roof be pitched with a slope of not less than 1:3. The proposed addition is a cube with flat wall that does not have windows or building articulations that is placed behind the main church building. The roof is primarily flat and not pitched. Therefore, the project is not consistent with Zoning Code.

23. The Commission finds that the subject property is 31,641 square feet and on gently sloping topography, but other than the lot area there is no difference from other surrounding properties. Neighboring properties are zoned R-3. Lot sizes range from 6,000 to 8,000 square feet. These properties are also located on gently sloping topography and are developed with single-family and multi-family residences. The project has been developed as a church use since 1940 and expanded to include a second building in 1961, but there are no special circumstances or exceptional characteristics applicable to the property, such as size, shape, topography, location or surrounding, that is not applicable to other properties in the area.

24. The Commission finds that the proposed project is for the expansion of an existing church. The property can continue to be used for a church even if the variance and expansion are denied. In addition, the property is zoned R-3 and can be developed for uses allowed in the zone in accordance with development standards required by the zone and use even without a variance; therefore, the approval of a variance and expansion of the existing use is not necessary to preserve substantial property right of the applicant.

25. The Commission finds that during community outreach for this project, several neighbors have stated that there is a lack of parking for them and their guests on

Sundays during the hours of the four church services and that there have been incidents of driveways being blocked by parked cars. Staff verified through a site inspection on a Sunday during church service hours that there was no available parking in the neighborhood. In addition, the project site is located one block north of Honolulu Avenue, which is the "Main Street" of Montrose and is shut down from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on Sundays to vehicular traffic and parking for the Montrose Harvest Market, which further impacts parking in the neighborhood. Therefore, the expansion of the church and increase in the occupant load of the main assembly hall without providing required parking would most likely lead to additional and increased impacts to street parking and cause adverse parking conditions for residents in the area.

26. The Commission finds that pursuant to sections 22.60.174 and 22.60.175 of the County Code, the community was properly notified of the public hearing by mail, newspaper, and property posting. Additionally, the Project was noticed and case materials were available on Regional Planning's website and at libraries located in the vicinity of the Montrose community. On October 12, 2016, a total of 387 Notices of Public Hearing were mailed to all property owners as identified on the County Assessor's record within a 1,000-foot radius from the Project Site, as well as four notices to those on the courtesy mailing list for the Montrose Zoned District and to any additional interested parties.
27. The Commission finds that pursuant to the California Public Resources Code Section 15270 "CEQA does not apply to projects which a public agency rejects or disapproves." Staff is recommending that this project be denied; therefore, the project qualifies for the, "Projects Which Are Disapproved" statutory exemption and an environmental document was not prepared for this project.
28. The location of the documents and other materials constituting the record of proceedings upon which the Commission's decision is based in this matter is at the Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning, 13th Floor, Hall of Records, 320 West Temple Street, Los Angeles, California 90012. The custodian of such documents and materials shall be the Section Head of the Zoning Permits West Section, Department of Regional Planning.

BASED ON THE FOREGOING, THE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION CONCLUDES THAT:

- A. The proposed project is not consistent with the adopted general plan for the area.
- B. The proposed use is not consistent with Zoning Code regarding the La Crescenta-Montrose Community Standards District pursuant to Section 22.44.139 of the County Code.
- C. There are not special circumstances or exceptional characteristics applicable to the property involved, such as size, shape, topography, location or surrounding, which are not generally applicable to other properties in the same vicinity and under identical zoning classifications.

- D. The requested variance is not necessary for the preservation of a substantial property right of the applicant such as that possessed by owners of the other property in the same vicinity and zone as the use is already established and existing. The requested expansion of an existing use is not necessary to the substantial property right of the applicant.
- E. The granting of the variance could be materially detrimental to the public welfare or be injurious to other property or improvements in the same vicinity and zone.

THEREFORE, THE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION:

1. Denies Variance Number RPPL2016001834 and Plot Plan Number 201300639.

ACTION DATE: November 16, 2016

VOTE:

MKK:sct
November 3, 2016

c: Each Commissioner, Zoning Enforcement, Building and Safety



GAIL FARBER, Director

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"

900 SOUTH FREMONT AVENUE
ALHAMBRA, CALIFORNIA 91803-1331
Telephone: (626) 458-5100
<http://dpw.lacounty.gov>

ADDRESS ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:
P.O. BOX 1460
ALHAMBRA, CALIFORNIA 91802-1460

February 23, 2016

IN REPLY PLEASE
REFER TO FILE: LD-3

TO: Mi Kim
Zoning Permits West Section
Department of Regional Planning

Attention Shaun Temple

FROM: Matthew Dubiel 
Project Entitlement & CEQA Section
Department of Public Works

SITE PLAN REVIEW
2409 FLORENCITA AVENUE
ASSESSOR'S MAP BOOK NO. 5807, PAGE 21, PARCEL NOS. 19, 20, AND 21
UNINCORPORATED COUNTY COMMUNITY OF MONTROSE
HR 16021001

- Public Works recommends approval of the "conceptually approved" SITE plan dated February 23, 2016.
- Public Works does **NOT** recommend approval of this SITE PLAN.

We reviewed the site plan for the project located at 2409 Florencita Avenue in the unincorporated County Community of Montrose. The project consists of a 2,600-square-foot expansion of an existing church to include a stage and additional seating area.

The following conditions apply and shall be completed prior to the issuance of the Certificate of Occupancy.

Road Conditions

1. Close the unused driveway along the property frontage on Orangedale Avenue between the existing church and the residence at 3909 Orangedale Avenue with standard curb, gutter, and sidewalk.

Mi Kim
February 23, 2016
Page 2

2. Reconstruct the common driveway on Orangedale Avenue to meet current Americans with Disabilities Act guidelines. The driveway currently serves both 3909 Orangedale Avenue and 3913 Orangedale Avenue. The reconstructed driveway shall only serve the existing residence at 3913 Orangedale Avenue since access to the church will not be from Orangedale Avenue.
3. Obtain a permission letter, subject to review and approval by Public Works, from the owner of APN 5807-021-019 (3913 Orangedale Avenue) to reconstruct the driveway at this location. It shall be the sole responsibility of the applicant to obtain all necessary permissions from offsite owners.
4. Submit street improvement plans and acquire street plan approval for the required road improvements listed above before obtaining a drainage or grading permit. Be advised that we currently have no known County construction projects within the limits of your project. Should a County project be scheduled and constructed ahead of the applicant's development, a pavement moratorium may be imposed that would prohibit any pavement work for 2 years after any pavement resurfacing or reconstruction project. The applicant is encouraged to contact this office periodically to determine scheduling of any future County project.
5. Execute an Agreement to Improve for the street improvements prior to issuance of a building permit.

For questions regarding the site plan conditions, or if you require additional information, please contact Ed Gerlits of Public Works' Land Development Division at (626) 458-4953 or egerlits@dpw.lacounty.gov.

ECG:tb

P:\dpub\SUBPCHECK\Plan\Single Lots\2409 Florencita Ave\PKP 201300007\PKP 201300007-2409 Florencita Ave recomendation memo R3 docx



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES FIRE DEPARTMENT

Fire Prevention Division – Land Development Unit

5823 Rickenbacker Road
Commerce, California 90040-3027
Office (323) 890-4243 Fax (323) 890-9783

DATE: January 8, 2013

SITE PLAN DATE: 05/15/13

TO: Department of Regional Planning
Zoning Permits - Shaun Temple

PROJECT #: R2013-01771

LOCATION: 2409 Florencita Avenue, Montrose

- The Fire Department Land Development Unit has no additional requirements for this permit.
- The required fire flow for this development is _____ gallons per minute for _____ hours. The water mains in the street fronting this property must be capable of delivering this flow at 20 psi residual pressure. Hydrant(s) flowing simultaneously may be used to achieve the required fire flow.
- All fire hydrants shall be 6" X 4" X 2 1/2" and conform to AWWA C503-75 or approved equal standard. All installations must meet Fire Department specifications. Fire hydrant systems must be installed in accordance with the Utility Manual of Ordinance 7834 and all installations must be inspected and flow tested prior to final approval.

Provide Fire Flow Test for _____ existing public fire hydrant(s).

- Water:** The fire flow test for the existing public fire hydrant near the Northwest corner of Florencita Avenue and Orangedale Avenue is adequate for this project.
- Access:** Maintain a minimum 5-foot walking access to within 150 feet to all exterior portions of the building from Florencita Avenue and Orangedale Avenue.
- Conditions for Approval:**
- Comments:** The proposed project is "cleared" to proceed to public hearing.

Once the project has been cleared by the planning commission, the building plans shall be submitted to the Department's Engineering Unit in Commerce for review.

Fire Protection facilities; including access must be provided prior to and during construction. Should any questions arise regarding this matter, please feel free to call our office at (323) 890-4243.

Inspector: *Wally Collins*

BURDEN OF PROOF

Montrose Church of the Nazarene

- A. *That there are special circumstances or exceptional characteristics applicable to the property involved, such as size, shape, topography, location or surroundings, which are not generally applicable to other properties in the same vicinity and under identical zoning classification*

The building and safety occupancy load meets maximum capacity use, but for a church that operates only two days a week, this is not a realistic expectation. Parking spaces have been derived from the total occupancy load calculation for the entire assembly area, but it does not make sense to allocate parking to support spaces, which are not the prime destination for church-goers. For example, people don't come to the church just to stand in the hallway.

The stage performers will be composed of people who will return to the audience once their performance is complete – there is no separate orchestra pit or dance troupe that will be there during all hours of operation – everyone will ultimately return to the audience or to the future support spaces, therefore they are double counted and should be given relief from the parking calculation.

Double-Counted Parking Occupancies:			
Area Code	Area	Occupancy (# people)	Parking Allocation
Entry	686.5	137	28 (Double counted)
Seating	1243.5	178	36
Stage to stage	706	100	20
Stage	1600	107	21 (Double counted)
		522 Occupancy	105 Parking Spaces
105 (Maximum Parking Allocation)- 48(Double Counted) =57 Actual Parking Used			
26 (Provided) – 105 (Maximum Parking Allocation) = 79 Spaces needed			
26 (Provided) - 57(Actual) = 31 Spaces Needed = requesting for a 54% parking relief request			

- B. *That such variance is necessary for the preservation of a substantial property right of the applicant such as that possessed by owners of other property in the same vicinity and zone; and*

The Church operates only two days a week, on weekends, it will not increase week loads on the property and as stated by in part A. We are requesting for an actual 54% parking relief. Other churches in the area have the same weekend load. We are not asking to increase the occupants on the site, just rather making it possible for all occupants to able to occupy the same assembly space.

C. *That such variance is necessary for the preservation of a substantial property the same vicinity and zone; and*

Church expansion will improve the assembly spaces for the existing congregation by allowing all visitors to sit within the main assembly space. This is unlike the current situation, in which overflow visitors watch the televised sermon in the adjacent reading room. That the granting of the variance will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or be injurious to other property or improvements in the same vicinity and zone



CONTRACT FOR USE OF PARKING LOT

The parties to this contract are Montrose Church of the Nazarene, a California Corporation, (operating at 2409 Florencita Drive, Montrose, CA 91020), hereinafter referred to as the "Church" and The Congregation of the Armenian Catholic Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, Inc. of Los Angeles, a California Corporation doing business as the Armenian Sisters' Academy of Los Angeles (operating at 2361 Florencita Drive, Montrose, CA 91020), hereinafter referred to as the "School."

"Church" would like its parishioners to use "School's" parking lot, located off of Mira Vista, just north of Florencita, on Sundays, to attend worship and other services at the "Church." Parishioners and those attending worship services will use the parking lot from approximately 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on Sundays.

"School" hereby agrees to allow use of its parking lot, with room for approximately 95 cars, on Sundays, from approximately 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. In exchange, "Church" agrees to pay School the sum of \$150.00 (One Hundred Fifty Dollars) for every day of usage. Monthly payments are due on the first business day, after the last Sunday of each month. All checks must be made payable to Armenian Sisters' Academy. "Church" agrees to pay for "School's" bank fees in case a check is returned for Non Sufficient Funds or for any other reason.

"Church" agrees to deliver to School a Certificate of Insurance naming School as an additional insured as well as an insurance endorsement and to provide a qualified security guard, as its agent and representative, to guard the lot, guide and patrol traffic, during the hours when the "Church" uses the "School's" parking lot. In addition, "Church" agrees (notwithstanding insurance) to indemnify, defend, and hold "School" harmless from/against any and all damages and injuries, losses, claims and actions, arising out of or occasioned by entry into the parking lot, exit out of the parking lot, and use of the parking lot through the arrangements made in this contract.

"School" will deliver the key to its parking lot gate to "Church," upon the signing of this contract and receipt of insurance documents, thus enabling "Church" agents and/or representatives to open and close the gate on Sundays. "Church" agrees to supervise use of the gate key and not allow any unauthorized usage of the parking lot. The security guard shall open and lock the parking lot gates, after each day of use. The security guard shall remain on site, until the last parked vehicle has left and vacated the parking lot. "Church" assumes full responsibility for all damages and injuries, claims and actions, arising out of the acts and/or omissions of the security guard and/or all other individuals to whom it entrusts the parking lot gate keys or those who gain access to the parking lot gate key.

All persons and personal property in or parked in the parking lot shall be at the sole risk and responsibility of the motorists or those using the parking lot. "School" is not liable for any theft, damages or personal injuries.
Contract for Use of Parking Lot

Parking is not permitted in the basketball court. Use of the "School's" trash bins is not permitted. "Church" agrees to maintain the used areas in a neat and clean condition and to that end will inspect, through its agents and representatives, the area and remove any rubbish, debris, etc. which may accumulate.

This contract may not be sold, assigned or transferred without the written consent of the parties.

Either party may terminate this contract, at will, by giving 6 months written notice in advance. Parties agree that from time to time, "School" may need to use its parking lot for its own purposes, and as such, the parking lot may periodically not be available for "Church" use. Should this occur, "School" will provide reasonable notice to "Church" in advance.

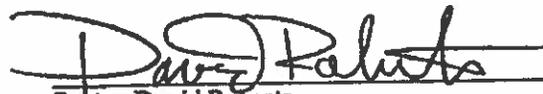
Any disputes regarding this contract shall be resolved by binding arbitration, under California law.

Executed on this 20th day of May, 2011, in Montrose, California.

DATED:


Sr. Lucia Al-Haik
President of "The Congregation of the
Armenian Catholic Sisters of the
Immaculate Conception, Inc. of
Los Angeles"
(dba Armenian Sisters' Academy of
Los Angeles)

DATED:


Pastor David Roberts
President of "Montrose Church of the
Nazarene"

montrose church, 2409 fiorenclia drive, montrose, ca 91020 818.249.8309 www.montrosechurch.org







