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PLEASE REFER TO FILE NO:

11834.01

February 11, 2014

BY HAND DELIVERY or EMAIL (patrice.lattimore@lacity.org)

The Honorable Los Angeles City Council c/o Holly L. Wolcott, Interim City Clerk 200 N. Spring Street, Room 360 Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: COUNCIL FILE 14-0171 -- REQUEST TO VOTE "NO" ON CHARTER SECTION 245 MOTION – Case No. ZA 2012-1402-ZV-ZAA-ZAD-1A

Dear Honorable Councilmembers:

I represent Janice Lazarof, individually and as the trustee owner of 333 Copa de Oro Road, the property that is adjacent to the easterly boundary of 10550 W. Bellagio Road.

I write to urge you to vote NO on Agenda Item 18, the motion to assert jurisdiction under City Charter Section 245.

In the context of land use decisions, the purpose of Charter Section 245 is not to provide a way for an applicant to obtain a special appeal to the City Council of a decision that is not otherwise appealable. The purpose of Section 245 is to enable the Council to correct the action of a Commission that has gone off the rails.

But the West Los Angeles Area Planning Commission did not go off the rails when it granted the appeal and denied the requested 50-foot height variance in this case. The Commissioners examined the evidence in the record, they read the transcript of the hearing before the ZA, and they went through each of the five findings for a zone variance with the ZA and the applicant's representatives. The Commission found that none of the five findings could be made. As just one example, the evidence before the ZA showed, as confirmed by the ZA and the applicant's representative at the APC hearing, that a comparable house could have been designed without the need for a variance, but it was not so designed because the applicant wanted

The Honorable Los Angeles City Council February 11, 2014 Page 2

a consistent roofline, contrary to the intent of the BHO, which is to encourage the terracing of structures so that building mass is broken up.

When you have approved the appointment of Area Planning Commissioners, this Council has spoken about how important their role is in City government. The West LA APC Commissioners take that role seriously as shown by their careful examination of the evidence and their detailed Determination Letter in this case.

Your review of the APC's Determination Letter, a copy of which is attached for your convenience, will clearly show that there is no reason to assert jurisdiction in this case

I therefore request that you vote no on the motion to assert jurisdiction under Charter Section 245.

Very truly yours,

Vitter J. Marm

Victor I. Marmon

VIM:et

Attachment



WEST LOS ANGELES AREA PLANNING COMMISSION

200 N. Spring Street, Room 272, Los Angeles, California, 90012-4801, (213) 978-1300 www.lacity.org/PLN/index.htm

Determination Mailing Date: FEB 0 4 2014

CASE NO: ZA-2012-1402-ZV-ZAA-ZAD-1A

CEQA: ENV-2005-8611-MND-REC2

Location: 10550 West Bellagio Road Council District: 5 Plan Area: Bel Air-Beverly Crest Zone: RE20-1

- Applicant: M&A Gabaee, LP Representative: Ben Kim/Stacey Brenner, Charles Company
- Appellant: Janice A. Lazarof, individually and as Trustee of the Henry and Janice A. Lazarof Family Trust dated June 10, 1985 as amended Representative: Victor I. Marmon, Marmon Law Offices

At its meeting on **January 15, 2014**, the following action was taken by the West Los Angeles Area Planning Commission:

- 1. Granted the appeal by Janice A. Lazarof, individually and as Trustee of the Henri and Janice A. Lazarof family Trust dated June 10, 1985, as amended.
- 2. Reversed the decision of the Zoning Administrator.
- 3. Denied a variance from Section 12.21-C.10(d) to permit a height of 50 feet in lieu of 36 feet height limit for the construction of a single family dwelling in the RE20-1 Zone located at 10550 West Bellagio Road.
- 4. Modified the findings of the Zoning Administrator as attached.

Fiscal Impact Statement: There is no General Fund impact as administrative costs are recovered through fees.

This action was taken by the following vote:

Moved:Commissioner DonovanSeconded:Commissioner FosterAyes:Commissioners Halper, and Linnick

Vote: 4 - 0

<u>Effective Date/Appeals:</u> Effective upon the mailing of this notice Appeal Status Not further appealable

ina

Randa Hanna, Commission Executive Assistant West Los Angeles Area Planning Commission

If you seek judicial review of any decision of the City pursuant to California Code of Civil Procedure Section 1094.5, the petition for writ of mandate pursuant to that section must be filed no later than the 90th day following the date on which the City's decision became final pursuant to California Code of Civil Procedure Section 1094.6. There may be other time limits which also affect your ability to seek judicial review.

Attachment: Revised Findings

cc: Notification List Jim Tokunaga Linda Clarke

APCW Revised Findings

At its meeting on January 15, 2014, the West Los Angeles Area Planning Commission granted the subject appeal and took the following action:

<u>Granted</u> the appeal by <u>Janice A. Lazarof, individually and as Trustee of the Henri and</u> <u>Janice A. Lazarof family Trust dated June 10, 1985, as amended</u> and reversed the decision of the Zoning Administrator and, <u>DENIED</u>:

a variance from Section 12.21-C.10(d) to permit a height of 50 feet in lieu of 36 feet height limit for the construction of a single family dwelling in the RE20-1 Zone located at 10550 West Bellagio Road.

<u>Modified</u> the findings of the Zoning Administrator as attached.

FINDINGS OF FACT

After thorough consideration of the statements contained in the application, the plans submitted therewith and thereafter, the statements made and other evidence introduced at the public hearings on January 9, 2013 and September 25, 2013 before the Zoning Administrator, the record, findings and decision of the Zoning Administrator, the arguments presented to the West Los Angeles Area Planning Commission orally and/or in writing, all of which are by reference made a part hereof, as well as knowledge of the property and surrounding district: (i) under Section 12.27-L of the Municipal Code the West Los Angeles Area Planning Commission reversed the decision of the of the Zoning Administrator to grant the height variance requested by the applicant and finds that the Zoning Administrator's action in granting the variance was in error and constituted an abuse of discretion, and (ii) the West Los Angeles Area Planning Commission frequested in Section 562 of the City Charter and Section 12.27-D of the Municipal Code have not been established, based upon the following facts and findings:

ZONE VARIANCE DENIAL FINDINGS

In order for a variance to be granted, all five of the legally mandated findings delineated in City Charter Section 562 and Municipal Code Section 12.27-D must be made in the affirmative. In order to reverse the action of the Zoning Administrator in granting a variance, the Area Planning Commission must make written findings setting forth specifically the manner in which the action of the Zoning Administrator was in error or constituted an abuse of discretion. The following (highlighted) is a delineation of the findings and the application of the relevant facts of the case to same:

1. The strict application of the provisions of the Zoning Ordinance would NOT result in practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships inconsistent with the general purpose and intent of the zoning regulations.

The Zoning Administrator ("ZA") erred and abused his discretion in stating that Finding 1 can be made, when he stated that

"[b]ecause height has to be measured from the lowest point, the entire height of the house regardless of where it is on the property is measured from the 477-foot datum point. This creates a practical difficulty because the height limit of 36 feet reduces the height of the home as the building footprint moves eastward from the datum point regardless of the 16-foot grade differential while maintaining the 36-foot height limit." (Letter of Determination dated November 1, 2013 ("LOD"), p. 12, indented, italicized paragraph.)

This statement is in error and an abuse of discretion in several ways.

- While the ZA correctly guotes how building height is to be measured under (a) the Baseline Hillside Ordinance ("BHO"), the ZA committed error and an abuse of discretion in concluding that this creates a practical difficulty for the applicant based on the mistaken concept that the building height must be reduced because the initial measurement point on the westerly side of the house is 16 feet below the easterly side of the house. In fact, the BHO permits the building "envelope height" -- the height of the applicant's proposed house -- to increase as the grade increases. Thus, there is no "practical difficulty" caused by the way height is measured due to the grade difference on the property. The applicant can design a house that complies with the BHO by following the terrain (stepping up the height of the house as the terrain height increases). The applicant has submitted no evidence showing that a house cannot be designed to comply with the BHO, and the ZA cites no evidence for his conclusion that the applicant has a practical difficulty because of the way height is measured.
- The appellant has provided substantial evidence to the ZA from architect David Applebaum that the applicant could design a house of the same size, along with associated amenities, that complies with the BHO and other zoning requirements. (Letter dated September 24, 2013, from David Applebaum to Jim Tokunaga.)
- (b) The ZA erred as a matter of fact by stating as a fact that "the subject parcel is actually below street grade." (LOD, p. 13, first full paragraph.) This is factually incorrect. The majority of the perimeter of the property fronts along Stone Canyon Road, which ranges from an elevation of 478 feet at the southwest corner of the property to 490 feet at the corner of Stone Canyon Road and Bellagio Road as shown by the applicant's drawings, while the elevation of the first floor of the proposed house, as shown by the applicant's drawings, is 494.30 feet. As noted by the ZA, the property slopes upward as it proceeds easterly from Stone Canyon Road. So, clearly, while there may be a slight dip in the property along Stone Canyon Creek, the ground floor of the house as proposed, and in fact most of the property, is above the grade of Stone Canyon Road, not below it as stated by the ZA.
- (c) The ZA erred and abused his discretion by stating that Finding 1 could be made because "the size, height and character of the subject home is consistent with the aesthetic goals of the BHO." (LOD, p. 13, first full paragraph.) The proposed house, with its flat roof line at 527 feet, is inconsistent with the purpose and intent of the BHO, which is designed to encourage terraced structures so that the mass of buildings is broken up, as evidenced by the City Council's adopted findings upon adoption of the BHO, which state:

"[D]epending on the zone and height district, a unique envelope height limit is applied, which encourages the terracing of structures up and down a hillside. Thus, with a varied roofline, structures would allow more light and air to reach neighboring properties, add visual interest, and enhance transitions between properties. The proposed provisions help to ensure that the mass of buildings is broken up, and that boxlike structures have a lower height thereby further reducing the looming factor which has been brought up by the public on several occasions."

(d) The ZA further erred and abused his discretion in making Finding 1 when he stated that:

"[t]he variance request is only to allow additional height so that the proposed residence can have a consistent roof line for the entire home that otherwise would be difficult to maintain because of the measurement of height from the lowest datum point and the grade difference." (LOD, p. 13, second full paragraph.)

It was an error and an abuse of discretion for the ZA to cite the applicant's desire for a "consistent roof line" as a basis for finding that the applicant faces a practical difficulty or unnecessary hardship that is inconsistent with the purpose and intent of the zoning ordinance, when the purpose and intent of enacting the BHO's envelope height requirement was to break up building mass, encourage the terracing of structures and varied rooflines and "discourage large and tall box-like structures." Moreover, it is established state law that attractiveness of design lacks legal significance and is irrelevant in these kinds of variance cases.

Thus, data focusing on the qualities of the property and Project for which the variance is sought, the desirability of the proposed development, the attractiveness of its design, the benefits to the community, or the economic difficulties of developing the property in conformance with the zoning regulations, lack legal significance and are irrelevant to the controlling issue of whether strict application of zoning rules would prevent the would-be developer from utilizing his or her property to the same extent as other property owners in the same zoning district. *Orinda Assn v. Board of Supervisors (1986) 182 Cal.App.3d 1145, 1166 (emphasis added).*

Based on the record on appeal, the West Los Angeles Area Planning Commission further finds that there has been no evidence presented that there is a practical difficulty or unnecessary hardship imposed by the zoning ordinance in designing and building a house without a variance on this property; there has been no evidence presented that the applicant could not design and build a house, including a house comparable to homes in the neighborhood, without a variance; the applicant's reason for requesting '[t]he variance is only to allow additional height so the proposed residence can have a consistent roof line for the entire home" (LOD, p. 13, second full paragraph.); the applicant's application for a variance is essentially for and due to subjective, aesthetic reasons; and substantial evidence was presented that a comparable house, including amenities, can be built without the requested variance in a manner consistent with the height regulation of the zoning ordinance.

Therefore, the West Los Angeles Area Planning Commission finds that Finding 1 cannot be made.

2. There are NO special circumstances applicable to the subject property such as size, shape, topography, location or surroundings that do not apply generally to other property in the same zone and vicinity.

The ZA erred and abused his discretion in stating that the following are special circumstances that support the making of Finding 2:

- "the topographical change between the western and eastern portions of the site";
- that the subject property is a "remaining vacant parcel in a mostly developed neighborhood";
- that the subject property has "a relatively long frontage along the public street"; and
- "the below street grade nature of the site." (LOD, p. 15, first full paragraph.)
- (a) It was error and an abuse of discretion for the ZA to base Finding 2 on topographical change on the property. There was no evidence provided by the applicant nor any cited by the ZA, to show that the topographical variation on the property is distinct in character from comparable properties in the same zone and vicinity. This is a hillside area; all properties have similar variation in topography.
- (b) The ZA abused his discretion in citing the vacancy of the property as a special circumstance. There is no connection between the requested height variance and the fact that the subject property is currently vacant.
- (c) The ZA erred and abused his discretion when he cited the approximately 595 foot length of the frontage of the property along Stone Canyon Road and Bellagio Road as a special circumstance; the applicant created this condition when lots "A" and "B" were tied together to form the subject property. Further, the ZA ignored substantial evidence in the record that there are several other properties in the same zone and vicinity that have long frontages along a public street, with several properties that front on two public streets. Appellant's property (APN 4362-013-014) to the east of the subject property has a 596 foot frontage along Copa de Oro Road and Bellagio Road. The property at 300 Stone Canyon Road (APN 4362-013-

011) immediately to the south of appellant's parcel map has a frontage of about 400 feet along Stone Canyon Road. Other properties that have frontages along two public streets include APN 4362-014-002 (Bel-Air Road and Copa de Oro Road) and APN 4362-014-001 (Copa de Oro Road and Bellagio Road).

(d) Finally, as noted in paragraph (b) of Finding 1 above, the ZA was in error when he cited as a basis for Finding 2 that the site is below grade.

Based on the record on appeal, the West Los Angeles Area Planning Commission further finds that there was no evidence presented, and none cited by the ZA, of special circumstances applicable to the property that prevent applicant from designing and building a house without a variance. No special circumstances exist that make the property distinct in character from comparable nearby properties, as is required to make this Finding. (Committee to Save Hollywoodland, etc. v. City of Los Angeles (2008) 161 Cal.App.4th 1168, 1183.) The Commission finds, based on the record on appeal, that this is not the only property in the same zone and vicinity that has a stream running through it; this is not the only property in the vicinity with varying elevations; the general topography of the property is essentially the same as the surrounding properties; and Stone Canyon Creek also runs through neighboring properties. As noted above, the applicant's application for a variance is essentially for and due to subjective, aesthetic reasons, and substantial evidence was presented that applicant could design and build a home on the property of comparable size to its proposed structure, and with comparable amenities, without a variance.

Therefore, the Commission finds that Finding 2 cannot be made.

3. Such variance is NOT necessary for the preservation and enjoyment of a substantial property right or use generally possessed by other property in the same zone and vicinity but which, because of such special circumstances and practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships, is denied the property in question.

The ZA erred and abused his discretion in stating that Finding 3 can be made.

(a) The applicant presented no evidence of any practical difficulty or unnecessary hardship that denies it the right to build a house on the property, and the ZA cites none. The Appellant presented expert evidence, through the letter from architect David Applebaum, that there are numerous ways to build a house of similar size and with similar amenities on this parcel in compliance with setback and other zoning regulations without the need for a height variance. Without any evidence of a practical difficulty or unnecessary hardship that necessitates a height

Page 7

variance in order to build a comparable house on the subject property, it was an abuse of discretion for the ZA to find that Finding 3 could be made.

- (b) The applicant presented no evidence of any "special circumstance" applicable to the subject property, and the ZA cites none, that is distinct in character from comparable properties in the same zone and vicinity. Without special circumstances, it was an abuse of discretion for the ZA to determine that Finding 3 could be made.
- (c) Additionally, the applicant provided no evidence, and the ZA cited none, that establishes that the denial of the requested height variance will prevent the applicant from constructing a house, including amenities, on the subject property, comparable to the applicant's neighbors' homes.

Based on the record on appeal, the West Los Angeles Area Planning Commission further finds that no special circumstances, practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships have been demonstrated; the property can be built upon and used similarly to other properties in the same zone and vicinity; there are no other properties in the vicinity with the same zoning that have received a height variance for the same or similar reasons that are used by the applicant to justify the present request; the vast majority of nearby properties are being used and enjoyed without a height variance; and the applicant requested this variance essentially for subjective, aesthetic reasons and submitted no evidence to the effect that the applicant could not design and build a house, including a house comparable to its neighbors' homes, without a variance.

Therefore, the Commission finds that Finding 3 cannot be made.

4. The granting of such variance WILL be materially detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to the property or improvements in the same zone or vicinity in which the property is located.

The ZA erred and abused his discretion in stating that Finding 4 can be made.

(a) The ZA erred and abused his discretion when he stated that the project site was lower in grade than the street. The evidence in the record before the ZA, as discussed above, shows that the grade of the project site starts out about even with or above Stone Canyon Road and then goes up to the east. While the creek bed naturally dips below street level, the pad upon which Applicant shows the house being built is above street level elevation and therefore the proposed house will be the box-like structure the City Council was attempting to avoid when it adopted the BHO. (See Finding by City Council, quoted above). (b) The ZA erred and abused his discretion in making Finding 4 because granting the variance will have an adverse precedential effect, detrimental to the goals of the Community Plan, since it would essentially raise the general height limit in the neighborhood and be used to justify other such height increase requests in the immediate area, as evidenced by the ZA's citing the height variance granted to the adjacent property to the south by the City Council in his justification for this Finding.

Based on the record on appeal, the West Los Angeles Area Planning Commission further finds that the granting of the variance will create an adverse visual effect on neighboring properties; will defeat the goals of the BHO, which goals include encouraging the building of terraced structures that break up the mass of structures and preserving existing views in hillside areas; and will have a precedential effect as it would essentially raise the general height limit in the neighborhood by providing support for others to seek height variances.

Therefore, the Commission finds that Finding 4 cannot be made.

5. The granting of the variance WILL adversely affect any element of the General Plan.

The ZA erred and abused his discretion in stating that Finding 5 can be made.

- (a) The ZA erred and abused his discretion when he found, without citing any supporting evidence, that the granting of the requested variance will not adversely affect any element of the General Plan. The facts recited by the ZA contradict the Finding he made. The ZA stated, correctly, that "the proposed height is not consistent with the plan's intent to require compliance with regulations pertaining to development in the hillside areas including compliance with the Baseline Hillside Ordinance." (LOD, p. 17, first full paragraph.) The ZA goes on to say, "The granting of the variance without the required findings to justify an approval of the request will adversely affect elements of the General Plan." (LOD, p. 17, second full paragraph.) As demonstrated above, the required Findings cannot be made, and therefore the conclusion necessarily follows that the Plan will be adversely affected.
- (b) The ZA further erred and abused his discretion because he justified Finding 5 by saying that since he made the other four Findings, there is no adverse effect on any element of the General Plan. By this erroneous circular reasoning, whenever the first four Findings can be made, then Finding 5 is automatic. There must be substantial evidence to support each of the five required Findings independently, including Finding 5, and the ZA must cite it. Here, the ZA does not cite any evidence to support his

Finding 5, because there was none before him. Without evidence to support it, it is an abuse of discretion for the ZA to have made Finding 5.

(c) Moreover, the ZA ignored substantial evidence in the record that Finding 5 cannot be made. As noted by the ZA, "The Land Use Element of the City's General Plan divides the City into 35 Community Plans" (LOD, p. 16, last paragraph.), and the Bel Air-Beverly Crest Community Plan is applicable to the subject property. In a letter to the ZA which is part of the record in this Case, appellant's zoning expert set out the purposes and policies of the Bel Air-Beverly Crest Community Plan that will be adversely affected by the granting of the requested variance:

"Chapter 2 (Purpose of the Community Plan) of the Bel Air-Beverly Crest Community Plan provides the following purposes:

"• Preserving and enhancing the positive characteristics of existing residential neighborhoods while providing a variety of housing opportunities with compatible new housing.

"• Preserving and enhancing the positive characteristics of existing uses which provide the foundation for Community identity, such as scale, height, bulk, setbacks, and appearance.

"Chapter 3 of the Bel Air-Beverly Crest Community Plan also provides the following Residential Land Use Policies:

"The intensity of land use in the mountain and hillside areas and the density of the population which can be accommodated thereon should be limited in accordance with the following:

"• The compatibility of proposed developments with existing adjacent development.

"• Design should minimize adverse visual impact on neighboring single family uses."

Based on the record on appeal, the West Los Angeles Area Planning Commission further finds that the granting of a height variance for the subject property

(i) will adversely affect the purpose and policies of preserving and enhancing the positive characteristics of the existing residential neighborhood as follows:

• The proposed height is excessive and not compatible with existing uses and appearances.

• The proposed height does not minimize adverse visual impact on neighboring uses.

• Granting the proposed height variance will set a precedent that will adversely affect the positive characteristics of the existing neighborhood.

- (ii) will defeat the purpose of the goals of the Baseline Hillside Ordinance, which goals include preserving existing views in hillside areas and encouraging the building of terraced structures that break up the mass of structures;
- *(iii)* will adversely affect the existing neighborhood in that the proposed height is excessive and not compatible with existing uses and appearances;
- (iv) will not minimize the adverse visual effect on neighboring uses; and
- (v) will set a precedent that will adversely affect the positive characteristics of the neighborhood.

Therefore, the Commission finds that Finding 5 cannot be made.

Additionally, based on the record on appeal, the Commission further finds that:

6. The granting of the variance will operate to grant a special privilege and permit a use substantially inconsistent with the limitations upon other properties in the same zone and vicinity Los Angeles Municipal Code Section 12.27-D and Charter Section 562.

There is no evidence that another property has received a height variance in the same zone and vicinity for the same reasons the applicant has put forth and under the same set of circumstances and facts as in this case, and the applicant submitted no evidence to the effect that applicant could not design and build an estate home, including a home comparable to its neighbors' homes, without a variance.

7. The conditions creating the need for a variance were self imposed Los Angeles Municipal Code Section 12.27-D and Charter Section 562.

Any "need" by the applicant for a height variance on this property is self-imposed by the applicant because the applicant is requesting the variance for aesthetic purposes only to achieve a consistent roof line for the entire home, when a comparable home can be designed without the need for a height variance.

MARMON LAW OFFICES

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PLEASE REFER TO FILE NO:

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February 11, 2014

BY HAND DELIVERY or EMAIL (patrice.lattimore@lacity.org)

The Honorable Los Angeles City Council c/o Holly L. Wolcott, Interim City Clerk 200 N. Spring Street, Room 360 Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: COUNCIL FILE 14-0171 -- Case No. ZA 2012-1402-ZV-ZAA-ZAD-1A

Dear Honorable Councilmembers:

Attached please find a copy of the transcript of the hearing on January 15, 2014, before the West Los Angeles Area Planning Commission in the above Case. As this transcript clearly shows, there is no basis for asserting jurisdiction in this Case, and the decision of the West Los Angeles Area Planning Commission should be upheld.

Very truly yours,

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Victor I. Marmon

VIM:et

Attachment

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4	WEST LOS ANGELES AREA PLANNING COMMISSION
5	REGULAR MEETING
б	HENRY MEDINA WEST L.A. PARKING ENFORCEMENT FACILITY
7	11214 W. EXPOSITION BOULEVARD, SECOND FLOOR,
8	ROLL CALL ROOM
9	LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90064
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13	TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS
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15	Wednesday, January 15, 2014
16	Commencing at 4:44 p.m.
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21	Joanna B. Brown, CSR No. 8570, RPR, CRR, RMR 369616
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1 APPEARANCES OF COUNSEL: 2 FOR THE APPLICANT: 3 LEWIS, BRISBOIS, BISGAARD & SMITH LLP BY: BRANT DVEIRIN, ESQ. 4 221 South Figueroa Street Suite 1200 5 Los Angeles, California 90012 (213) 580-6317 (213) 250-7900 Fax 6 brant.dveirin@lewisbrisbois.com 7 FOR THE APPELLANT: 8 LAW OFFICES OF VICTOR I. MARMON 9 BY: VICTOR I. MARMON, ESQ. 1875 Century Park East 10 Suite 1600 Los Angeles, California 90067 (310) 551-8120 11 (310) 551-8113 Fax 12 vmarmon@earthlink.net 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 2

1 Los Angeles, California; Wednesday, January 15, 2014 2 4:44 p.m. 3 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: 4 Good afternoon. Welcome to the West Los Angeles Area Planning 5 6 Commission Meeting of Wednesday, January 15th. 7 Housekeeping items, phones should be off or on vibrate. 8 If you are planning to speak this evening, please fill out a speaker card, and turn it in to staff. Parking 9 10 seems to be okay. The lot wasn't too full. So I won't 11 make any announcements about folks needing to move 12 their cars. Let the records reflect the Commissioners 13 14 present today, Commissioner Halper, 15 Commissioner Donovan, Commissioner Linnick, and Commissioner Foster. We are going to go in order of 16 17 the items on the agenda, although I think I'm going to take four out of order because it's been continued. 18 So 19 we'll start off with the departmental report, if there is one, from the City Planning Department. 20 21 Hi, Mr. Tokunaga. JIM TOKUNAGA: So I am going to be doing 22 23 everything today, yes. Shana could not be here today. 24 She had a conflicting meeting. So she asked that I 25 just convey that to you, and there was nothing to 3

report.

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COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Okay.

JIM TOKUNAGA: And so I'll leave it at that. COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Okay. Thank you.

We have on the agenda, although this may not be coming up tonight, but other items of interest. We have the presentation on the Expo corridor.

8 COMMISSIONER FOSTER: No. We are not going to 9 have that.

COMMISSIONER LINNICK: We are not?

11 JIM TOKUNAGA: Yeah. So I got a call from 12 Patricia Diefenderfer just saying that even though it 13 was on the agenda, the intent -- that they were not 14 So they could possibly come on the next agenda. ready. 15 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Okay. Great. Thank No. 2 is "Commission Business." The advance 16 vou. 17 calendar, are there any changes to the advance calendar? 18

RANDA HANNA: We are good.

20 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Okay. Thank you. Are 21 there any Commission requests? No. We are just 22 rolling along. The third item on "Commission 23 Business," approval of the minutes from our last 24 meeting, which was December 4th. It was last year. 25 COMMISSIONER FOSTER: Commissioner Foster. I

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1	would move we approve the minutes of December 4th.
2	COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Commissioner Donovan.
3	Second.
4	RANDA HANNA: Commissioner Foster?
5	COMMISSIONER FOSTER: Aye.
6	RANDA HANNA: Commissioner Donovan?
7	COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Aye.
8	RANDA HANNA: Commissioner
9	COMMISSIONER FOSTER: Halper.
10	RANDA HANNA: Halper?
11	COMMISSIONER HALPER: Aye.
12	RANDA HANNA: Commissioner Linnick?
13	COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Aye.
14	RANDA HANNA: And the item has been the
15	motion is carried. Thank you.
16	COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Thank you. Okay. And
17	then our next item, I'm going to take Item No. 4 out of
18	order. It's VTT-71898-CN-A1 and its related cases,
19	DIR-2012-1112-DB, CEQA Environmental
20	2012-111-MND [sic], and the address is 11965 West
21	Montana Avenue. We understand that this matter has
22	been continued.
23	JIM TOKUNAGA: Yes. Just so I set the record
24	straight, that is another one of those instances where
25	there was a tract map appeal, and there was a companion
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1 density bonus case that's actually currently still in 2 the appeal period. So we don't want that -- a 3 situation which has happened, like, last time where we had two things going on at different times. So we are 4 5 waiting for the appeal period on the density bonus to 6 finish so that if that's appealed, that it gets all 7 bundled as one package. 8 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Good. Okay? So that's -- we noticed 9 JIM TOKUNAGA: 10 that on the agenda last week, and I immediately -- even 11 though it's not my case, I immediately let the staff 12 people know that this Commission would not accept it 13 that way. 14 COMMISSIONER FOSTER: Thank you. 15 JIM TOKUNAGA: Okay. Thank you. 16 COMMISSIONER FOSTER: You are listening. 17 JIM TOKUNAGA: Yes. COMMISSIONER LINNICK: So do we need to -- do 18 19 we need to do anything or -- it happened, I know -- I 20 got a call. It happened from --21 JIM TOKUNAGA: Oh. 22 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: -- your department, but do we need to continue the matter? 23 24 COMMISSIONER FOSTER: Right. I think so. 25 JIM TOKUNAGA: I believe a letter has been --6

1 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Are the parties here --2 (Simultaneously speaking.) 3 RANDA HANNA: Yes. It will be continued until February 28th. It has been --4 5 COMMISSIONER FOSTER: So we will make -- I will make a motion --6 7 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Yeah. 8 COMMISSIONER FOSTER: -- that we continue case, that 11966 [sic] West Montana Avenue, to 9 10 February the 18th, is it? 11 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: 19th? Oh. 12 COMMISSIONER FOSTER: February --13 RANDA HANNA: February 28th. 14 COMMISSIONER FOSTER: -- 28th. Okay. 15 Commissioner Foster. 16 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Okay. We don't, oh --17 Commissioner Linnick -- point-of-order -- information. We don't have -- do we have a meeting on -- we have 18 19 February 5th and then February 19th. RANDA HANNA: February 19th. So it will be on 20 21 February 19th. COMMISSIONER FOSTER: 19th. 22 23 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: 19th. Okay. 24 COMMISSIONER FOSTER: Okay. So I move -- I change my motion -- I modify my motion to 25 7

1 February 19th. 2 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Commissioner Donovan. 3 Second. 4 RANDA HANNA: Okay. Commissioner Foster? 5 COMMISSIONER FOSTER: Aye. RANDA HANNA: Commissioner Donovan? 6 7 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Aye. RANDA HANNA: Commissioner Halper? 8 COMMISSIONER HALPER: 9 Aye. RANDA HANNA: Commissioner Linnick? 10 11 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Aye. 12 RANDA HANNA: And the motion is carried. 13 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Okay. Great. So 14 now we'll go back to Item No. 3, 15 ZA-2012-1402-ZV-ZAA-ZAD-1A, CEQA Environmental 2005-8611-MND-REC2, and the address is 10550 West 16 17 Bellagio Road. If staff can address that for us. COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: 18 Excuse me, 19 Madam President. I just have one quick -- a couple 20 quick disclosures. I have viewed the property site, and also I received a telephone call from a 21 Steve Twining, asking me if I was going to attend 22 today's APC meeting. I understand Mr. Twining may 23 24 represent one of the homeowners associations in the 25 neighborhood. I told him yes. We had no discussion

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1	whatsoever regarding the merits of this case.
2	COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Thank you.
3	Mr. Tokunaga
4	COMMISSIONER FOSTER: Commissioner Foster. I
5	have the same disclosure. I went and I saw the
б	property. I viewed it. I did get a call from
7	Mr. Twining, but we had no discussion about the case at
8	all. It was just whether I was going to be here
9	tonight. I said, yes, I was.
10	COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Commissioner Linnick.
11	I'm feeling very alone in that I did not get a call
12	from this said Mr. Twining, whoever he is, but I also
13	have seen the property. Okay. Staff.
14	JIM TOKUNAGA: Okay. So
15	COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Thank you.
16	JIM TOKUNAGA: this item is an appeal of my
17	approval of a height variance. Actually, it's a
18	partial appeal. The appeal itself is on the variance
19	that was granted for an over-in-height home, a
20	single-family home of 50 feet in lieu of the 36 feet
21	allowed. The site itself, I felt
22	First of all, I think the site might be
23	familiar to you because, about a year ago, there was an
24	adjacent site that also was under the same request for
25	a variance for height, and in that case, I denied the
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appeal -- I mean, denied the request. So, in this
 particular case, I've approved it. Okay. And --

3 There are a lot of things that have happened 4 in that one year that we've held the original hearing, 5 which was in January, approximately one year ago from 6 today. We held another hearing back in September, and 7 a lot of new information was given to me. And I felt that, on this particular site, there are some 8 circumstances on the site that perhaps should allow for 9 10 a variance. There is a creek, that you are all aware 11 of, that is required to be maintained. There is a 12 15-foot easement for the creek itself and then 10-foot landscape buffer on each side. And that is part of a 13 14 parcel map approval that was approved by this 15 Commission, I want to say, five years ago or so.

16 And although the original applicant --17 application was to remove that condition, they've kept that condition. So, now, they have to comply with it. 18 19 In doing so, I felt that it did cut into the property, at least portions of the property. The site itself has 20 what I believe is a very long frontage along the 21 22 street, and you have to maintain setbacks along that 23 street frontage.

And if you look at the site, too, it's described -- and this is the way the applicants

1	themselves described it. It's sort of a bowl shape,
2	and by that, I mean, if you from the street, it sort
3	of slopes down a little. And because of the
4	landscaping and the creek and the way it's set back
5	from the street, I although the height, you know, is
б	50 feet, I didn't believe that it would be that
7	visible. And only a portion of that, the building
8	itself, the home itself, is actually above at the
9	50 feet, the portion that's measured nearest to the
10	creek. And so in order
11	And I understand that the building can the
12	home can be designed to, sort of, terrace along the
13	topography, but in doing so, it may cut into the
14	hillside. There is once you, sort of, leave the
15	level marginally level area, it sort of slopes up,
16	not that they would build up there, but that is another
17	way to construct on the site.
18	And so, because of the slope, the creek going
19	through there, the setbacks that are required, I felt
20	that the site has some constraints on it that perhaps
21	allowed for the variance to be granted.
22	And then the appeal was filed by a neighboring
23	property owner, who believes that, you know, first, a
24	variance should not be granted because there's no
25	hardship, there's no special circumstance, and that,

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you know, perhaps that the building itself would be -obstruct views, or it would be -- sort of obstruct views along the road itself, which is what I'm reading now.

So the neighborhood itself, this is like, I 5 6 want to say, the last remaining or one of the last two 7 remaining parcels along this street. The homes vary. Some are set back a lot, quite a bit. Others are --8 don't have much of a setback. I don't -- some -- I 9 10 don't remember seeing the creek anywhere else. Ιt 11 could be behind walls or fences so I can't see it, but 12 in this particular case, yeah, the creek is pretty 13 prominent. So that in itself I felt was a special 14 circumstance.

With that being said, the variance was granted, and here we are today. The neighbors have appealed.

18 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Commissioner Linnick.
 19 COMMISSIONER HALPER: Commissioner Halper. A
 20 question --

JIM TOKUNAGA: Yes.

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22 COMMISSIONER HALPER: -- Mr. Tokunaga. This 23 is, like, almost deja vu. The Stone Canyon case, which 24 the Commission heard, is very parallel to this 25 particular case. What would -- succinctly, what would

1	be the differences? Because the Commission did not
2	approve the case or did not approve the request of the
3	developer.
4	What do you see as the specifics that would
5	make this different than for approval?
б	JIM TOKUNAGA: Well, for myself, the original
7	case, the one adjoining this site I believe that was
8	the 360 Stone Canyon and in that particular case,
9	the whole argument from the very beginning, at least
10	and they changed representatives, but the applicant's
11	original representative was saying that it the
12	hardship was that they had pulled the building permits,
13	and it was under construction, and therefore, it was a
14	hardship, you know, that
15	But if that was their rationale for granting a
16	variance, I felt that that was not appropriate. And
17	then so they changed the representatives, and we
18	held the hearing. I felt that, at the second hearing,
19	the special circumstances were more geared towards the
20	actual physical site and not so much, you know, well,
21	the height is measured differently now than when we
22	originally pulled the permit, and, you know, so,
23	therefore, we have a hardship.
24	But, you know, in fairness to the question,
25	the sites are contiguous. So, you know, they are the

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1 same. 2 COMMISSIONER HALPER: Thank you. 3 JIM TOKUNAGA: Yeah. COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Commissioner Linnick. 4 So is that the new information that you are referring 5 6 to? When you started off your presentation, you said 7 that, you know, we had heard this before but that based 8 on the new information given to you, and then you stated the slope and the creek and the setbacks. 9 10 JIM TOKUNAGA: Well, yes. 11 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: You now are --12 JIM TOKUNAGA: The original hearing, which 13 was, you know -- was a joint hearing and with the 14 Advisory Agency, there were other -- this case, along 15 with two other cases, we were hearing all three 16 together, and there seemed to be all over the place. 17 It wasn't specific to one or the other. So it was hard 18 to discern what the requests were, but the hardship in 19 that particular case was -- in the 360 Stone Canyon was 20 that it was already under construction, and they 21 measured the height different. 22 Subsequent to that, they dropped the parcel 23 map modification request. So the original parcel map 24 that was approved by the West L.A. Area Planning 25 Commission now stands. And all this new information as 14

1	far as measuring and the way the setbacks are, the open
2	space, the hillside, the topography, all that stuff was
3	sort of being pushed onto the Commission perhaps during
4	the appeal for the 360 Stone Canyon, but all that
5	was information that the Zoning Administrator
6	originally never really was presented. So we that's
7	why we held the other hearing. And we held another
8	hearing for this case specifically in September of last
9	year.
10	COMMISSIONER FOSTER: I have my question is
11	the parcel map was approved
12	JIM TOKUNAGA: Yes.
13	COMMISSIONER FOSTER: with the conditions,
14	the setback, and everything from the creek. Was the
15	current owner was the current owner the same owner
16	then? Did he own the property then?
17	JIM TOKUNAGA: Yes. I believe it was Mr
18	(Simultaneous speaking.)
19	COMMISSIONER FOSTER: Okay. So he's before
20	he started any construction, he was aware of all of the
21	conditions that were put on the property; is that
22	correct?
23	JIM TOKUNAGA: I would imagine he was.
24	COMMISSIONER FOSTER: Okay.
25	JIM TOKUNAGA: I can't speak for him, but I
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1 would imagine he was, yes. 2 COMMISSIONER FOSTER: Well, I would think 3 so --4 JIM TOKUNAGA: Yeah. Yes. COMMISSIONER FOSTER: -- since he owned the 5 6 property then. You are saying he did own the property. 7 JIM TOKUNAGA: Yes. 8 COMMISSIONER FOSTER: And I remember very well 9 when we had a lot of testimony about that property from 10 various environmental groups and from the Council 11 office at the time because there was a great concern 12 over the creek. And it, the creek, runs all the way 13 down Stone Canyon. 14 JIM TOKUNAGA: Yes. 15 COMMISSIONER FOSTER: So it does. 16 JIM TOKUNAGA: Okay. 17 COMMISSIONER FOSTER: So it does. Okay. 18 Thank you. So he was the owner. 19 JIM TOKUNAGA: Yes, he was. COMMISSIONER FOSTER: So he had that -- all of 20 21 that information before he drew plans and before he 22 started building? 23 JIM TOKUNAGA: Yes. 24 COMMISSIONER FOSTER: Okay. Thank you. 25 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Commissioner Linnick. 16

A couple quick ones, although I probably have some more 1 2 later. So the information we received from the 3 architect, I think was in the letter from the 4 architect, of the appellant talked about the lack of a 5 slope analysis or a plot plan. Are those things that 6 you have or that you've seen? 7 JIM TOKUNAGA: I do not have them. No, I do 8 not have them. COMMISSIONER LINNICK: 9 Is that something that 10 you usually would have in a case like this? And was 11 that at all an issue for you? 12 JIM TOKUNAGA: We had some slope analysis 13 maps, but it wasn't specifically geared towards the 14 It was just sort of like a map that had the request. 15 topo lines on it, and I -- we did have that map, but it 16 wasn't an analysis of how the project height was 17 measured. So, you know, that's all I can say. I do have that, but it's not a specific analysis. 18 19 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Okav. 20 COMMISSIONER FOSTER: Do you -- do you not have a plot plan still? 21 22 JIM TOKUNAGA: I do have a -- I do have a plot 23 plan that sort of defines the outline of the building, 24 yes. This is the one that we approved. 25 COMMISSIONER FOSTER. Okay. Thank you. 17

1 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Go ahead. 2 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Commissioner Donovan. 3 Just so that I understand everything here, there's no 4 appeal of the adjustment allowing the overheight fence; 5 correct? No, I did not see that. 6 JIM TOKUNAGA: 7 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: So that's not before 8 Okay. And, now, we have these two companion us. They are property right next to each other, 9 cases. 10 Stone Canyon and Bellagio. And the applications for 11 variances was filed -- both filed on the same day, 12 September 21, 2012, and they both requested the same 13 height variance; correct? JIM TOKUNAGA: Yes, it sounds familiar. 14 Yes. 15 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: And they both had the 16 same public hearing on January 9, 2013? 17 JIM TOKUNAGA: Yes. 18 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Okay. Then, looking 19 through the timeline here, you denied the variance for 20 Stone Canyon, and then that was appealed to this APC, and we denied -- that was -- we heard it on 21 22 June 5th, 2013. We denied the appeal, and we upheld 23 your denial; right? 24 JIM TOKUNAGA: That's correct. 25 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Okay. And then CD5

filed a 245 motion to remove the matter to the 1 2 City Council. 3 JIM TOKUNAGA: Uh-huh, yes. COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: And then the 4 5 City Council essentially vetoed our determination and remanded it back to this APC. 6 7 JIM TOKUNAGA: That's correct. 8 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Okay. So, then, on August 7, we had another hearing on this Stone Canyon 9 10 property. 11 JIM TOKUNAGA: Appeal, yes. 12 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: And at that time, you 13 did not change your initial denial -- determination to deny the variance. 14 15 JIM TOKUNAGA: No. 16 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Okay. And, then, 17 there's another 245 motion. And then, on September 11, the Council reversed the decisions and granted the 18 19 variance to Stone Canyon. 20 JIM TOKUNAGA: That's correct. 21 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Okay. And, then, after 22 that, on September 25th, you hold another hearing on 23 the Bellagio property. 24 JIM TOKUNAGA: That's correct. 25 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Okay. And then, on 19

1 November 1st, you grant the variance on pretty much the 2 same facts as presented on the Stone Canyon property. 3 JIM TOKUNAGA: You mean as far as what 4 happened at Council or --5 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Well, I guess, when 6 Commissioner Halper was asking you for the difference, 7 what seemed to come out for me is that the facts were 8 the same, but the reasoning behind the applicant's 9 request for a variance had changed slightly. 10 JIM TOKUNAGA: Slightly, yes. 11 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: But the facts are the 12 same. The facts are the same. 13 JIM TOKUNAGA: 14 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Okay. And I quess the 15 tough question I have to ask, did the decision by the 16 City Council on Stone Canyon have any effect whatsoever 17 on your determination to grant the variance on Bellagio? 18 19 JIM TOKUNAGA: No, it did not. COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Did the -- when the 20 21 City Council made -- overturned both of our rulings, 22 did they find -- make different findings of facts? 23 Were different facts presented? 24 They would have had to -- well, JIM TOKUNAGA: 25 in order to grant the variances, they would have had to 20

make those findings.

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2 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: They'd have to make 3 findings, but did they -- did they -- were different 4 facts provided to them?

5 JIM TOKUNAGA: I have -- I do not know. Okay. 6 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Okay. And so did you, 7 in any way, decide that the Stone Canyon case created 8 precedent for the Bellagio variance?

9 JIM TOKUNAGA: Did the Stone -- no, no, 10 because I -- well, my initial decision wasn't a denial. 11 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Yeah. I only ask that 12 because --

JIM TOKUNAGA: Yeah.

COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: -- in your report, you said you -- the adjacent property is currently being developed with a similar height variance granted by the City Council, and I was wondering about the significance --

JIM TOKUNAGA: Oh, yeah. I just put that inthere as background information. Yeah.

21 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Okay. When we go 22 through the five findings that you have to make for a 23 variance -- and the first one is that the strict 24 application of the zoning ordinance would result in 25 practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships

1 inconsistent with the general purposes and intent of 2 the zoning regulations -- we asked the same question 3 with Stone Canyon. 4 Can a house of approximately the same footage 5 presently be built on the Bellagio property without a 6 variance? 7 Yes, it could. JIM TOKUNAGA: 8 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Okay. And I went through the transcript of the -- of your hearing there, 9 10 and nobody from applicant represented to you that "If 11 we don't get this variance, we can't build a house 12 that's of the same square footage." Nobody said that; 13 correct? 14 JIM TOKUNAGA: No, I don't believe they did. 15 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Okay. And you did receive a report, as a matter of fact, from the 16 17 appellant, David Applebaum, saying that they can build -- they can redesign the house and basically 18 19 build something about the same size without needing a variance. You did. 20 21 JIM TOKUNAGA: Yes, uh-huh. 22 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: And you didn't receive 23 any evidence that contradicted Mr. Applebaum. 24 JIM TOKUNAGA: I did not. 25 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Okay. So a denial of a 22

1	variance is not going to prevent the applicant from
2	building a house on his property.
3	JIM TOKUNAGA: No, it would not.
4	COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: So I'm trying I'm
5	having difficulty finding the unnecessary hardship or
б	the practical difficulties if the applicant the
7	house isn't started to be built. They could just
8	design a house that's within the height limits. It can
9	be just as big as it was going to be big.
10	What are the unnecessary hardships or
11	practical difficulties?
12	JIM TOKUNAGA: Well, when I'm this is
13	Jim Tokunaga. When I'm reviewing a case, I'm looking
14	at the case as far as what they are proposing to build,
15	and I felt that with you know, I guess I can what
16	you are saying is I could say, "Well, no. You can
17	design it in a different way. So I'm going to deny the
18	variance."
19	But what I'm looking at is, based on the
20	proposal of the project, for what they want to do, do I
21	find that there are, you know, special circumstances or
22	any reasons why the hardships on the site would prevent
23	them from developing the home the way they want? And
24	that's, you know that was my reasoning for the
25	variance.

1 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: That gets to the crux 2 of the matter because I remember, in the Stone Canyon 3 case, the applicant's attorney said, "We just want this for aesthetic reasons." And I noticed in this case 4 that the reason for the variance is so that the 5 proposed residence can have a consistent roof line for 6 7 the entire home. So they basically want this variance 8 for subjective, aesthetic reasons.

9 JIM TOKUNAGA: You know, yeah, I imagine. You 10 will have to ask the applicants, but I would imagine 11 that's probably it.

12 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Now, you had -- one of 13 the things you had to find is that the proposed height 14 variance is going to be consistent with all of the 15 goals of the Baseline Hillside Ordinance, the BHO, and 16 I looked at that. And isn't one of the BH goals to 17 encourage terrace structures that break up a boxy 18 building?

JIM TOKUNAGA: Yes, it is.

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20 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: And the other thing, 21 you know, I saw a lot of things in the hearing 22 transcript and -- about that this height is not going 23 to block a view, which, I guess, is the subject of a 24 debate between both sides. But I looked at the BHO, 25 and it doesn't say anything about blocking the view.

1	It says the policy at 1-3.3 is to "preserve existing
2	views in hillside areas."
3	So even if it's not going to block the view, a
4	height variance on here is not it won't have the
5	same view it would have had if it was within the height
6	limit; correct?
7	JIM TOKUNAGA: "View" meaning from the
8	neighbor or
9	COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Yes.
10	JIM TOKUNAGA: Well
11	COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: That would be the only
12	view that would be subject to the appeal, the neighbors
13	having their views changed, if not blocked.
14	JIM TOKUNAGA: Yes. Well, yeah. It's a
15	vacant site. So anything that you put on the site, you
16	know, is going to be visible regardless, I think,
17	whether it's 50 feet or 36 feet.
18	COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: And there was evidence,
19	at least from some of the neighbors, that they felt
20	that it was going to block their views.
21	JIM TOKUNAGA: The adjacent property owner, at
22	least their representative, did indicate that they felt
23	that there might be some obstruction of views.
24	COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Now, the second part of
25	the variance findings that have to be made are the
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1	special circumstances. And, again, we went through
2	this on Stone Canyon, but the second one there is that
3	there have to be special circumstances applicable to
4	the property such as size, shape, topography, location,
5	or surroundings that do not generally apply
б	generally to the other property in the vicinity. And
7	the special circumstances that I heard you cite in your
8	report and also today are the creek, the topographical
9	changes, and the long frontage on the street.
10	Now, this is not the only property in the
11	vicinity that has a stream running through it.
12	JIM TOKUNAGA: That's correct.
13	COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: And this is not the
14	only property in the vicinity that had varying
15	elevations.
16	JIM TOKUNAGA: That would be correct.
17	COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: I mean, all of the
18	properties on the hillsides have varying elevations;
19	right?
20	JIM TOKUNAGA: Yes.
21	COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Okay. And the reason
22	why there's such a long frontage in this particular
23	case is the applicant voluntarily tied two properties
24	together to build the project; right?
25	JIM TOKUNAGA: Yes, the tied parcels are
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1	tied.
2	COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: So wouldn't that
3	special circumstance be self-imposed?
4	JIM TOKUNAGA: Well, they tied it. So it's
5	you know, it's their decision.
6	COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Okay. And, then, I
7	think we've covered the No. 3, which is necessary is
8	the variance necessary for the preservation and
9	enjoyment of a substantial property right or use
10	generally possessed by other property but because of
11	the special circumstances and practical difficulties or
12	unnecessary hardship is denied. But we already know
13	that this property can be built on. A large house can
14	be built on.
15	And are there any other properties that
16	received a height variance for aesthetic reasons?
17	JIM TOKUNAGA: Well, for aesthetic reasons, I
18	can't say for sure. There are other variances in the
19	area, but I couldn't answer that. There is a house
20	across the street.
21	COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: And let's see. Now,
22	No. 4, which is another finding that you have to make
23	for granting a variance, whether it's going to and
24	you have to find that the variance will not be
25	materially detrimental to the public welfare. But the
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1	only finding I saw that you had there on page 16 was
2	that it's not going to block any views, and the height
3	won't be noticeable. But that brings us back to
4	whether the BHO says "preserve existing views," not
5	necessarily "block," but isn't
6	One thing that struck me on this was that you
7	stated at page 17 that "The proposed height is not
8	consistent with the plan's intent to require compliance
9	with regulations pertaining to development in the
10	hillside area." And I saw that, and it jumped out at
11	me. Isn't compliance with regulations important to the
12	public welfare?
13	JIM TOKUNAGA: Okay. So what I'm saying here
14	is that the height that they are asking for is, of
15	course, not permitted by the zone, and the only way we
16	can grant that additional height is through a variance
17	process subject to these findings, and I guess what all
18	I'm saying is that I've made those findings.
19	COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Can the granting of a
20	variance on this property have any precedential effect
21	on future land use in the area?
22	JIM TOKUNAGA: I think any kind of approval
23	would, yes.
24	COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: I think we've covered
25	the fifth one about all of the things that go with
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No. 4 also are included in No. 5. Thank you. I have 1 2 no more questions. 3 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: All right. Let's start with the appellant. Can I have the appellant's 4 5 representative, Mr. Marmon. If you can, state your 6 name and address for the record, please, and you have 7 five minutes. 8 MR. MARMON: Thank you. Members of the Commission, Mr. Tokunaga, guests, public speakers, my 9 10 name is Victor Marmon. My office address is 11 1875 Century Park East, Suite 1600, Los Angeles, 12 California 90067. 13 COMMISSIONER FOSTER: Do you have a cell phone 14 on? 15 MR. MARMON: No. 16 COMMISSIONER FOSTER: It might be causing --17 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Our last meeting, the 18 same thing happened. 19 COMMISSIONER FOSTER: We had a problem with that. Okay. 20 21 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: And I don't know -- we don't know what it was. So we'll --22 23 COMMISSIONER FOSTER: -- give you an extra 24 minute there. COMMISSIONER LINNICK: We'll bear with it. 25 29

1 MR. MARMON: Hopefully -- I've moved it 2 further --3 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Okay. MR. MARMON: -- further back. Wait. I have 4 it with me. That's the problem. 5 6 COMMISSIONER FOSTER: There you go. Maybe that makes a difference. Give him an extra --7 8 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Yeah. We're --COMMISSIONER FOSTER: We'll give him an extra 9 10 minute. 11 MR. MARMON: Sorry. 12 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: This won't count 13 against your time. 14 MR. MARMON: That's all right. I hope to not use the time. 15 16 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Okay. Okay. 17 MR. MARMON: First, I'd like to give to the Commission some proposed findings of fact that specify 18 how the ZA erred and abused his discretion in this --19 in issuing the letter of decision. So if I may. 20 21 Second, I'd like to point out that my client is not here. She is extremely disappointed. She's 22 23 been at every single public hearing in this matter. 24 She was involved in issues relating to the protection of the stream and -- since 2006, and she has the flu. 25

She just can't -- couldn't make it. So she's really 1 2 quite saddened that she can't be here. 3 I know that you all do your homework. You 4 really read through what people provide to you. So I'm 5 not going to repeat what I've said in my letter to you or in the appeal. I just want to point out a few 6 7 things. 8 While the ZA said that approving cases will have a precedential effect, I want to make it very 9 10 clear that the 360 case is not final. We have filed a 11 petition for writ of mandate against the City. It will 12 be heard, so that that matter is open. There is no 13 final decision there. And we will pursue that to the Court of Appeal or the Supreme Court if necessary 14 15 because that adoption of the zone variance by the 16 City Council was in error and a massive abuse of 17 discretion. In fact, it was just a political hack job, but we'll leave that for another time. 18 19 Mr. Tokunaga indicated that there were 20 different facts presented in the 360 case, perhaps more effectively in the 10550 case, about grade differences 21 and elevations and things like that. I want to point 22 out that when Councilmember Koretz first 245'ed to 23 24 this -- your initial action, he cited the sloping 25 property from the northwest to -- northeast to the

1 southwest. He cited the grade difference between the 2 westerly portion and the easterly portion. He cited 3 the creek. These are not new facts. These are facts 4 that are the same for this property and the other 5 property, and you should treat both properties the 6 same.

7 Mr. Tokunaga was not provided with a slope 8 analysis map. That is a very particular document that 9 the Planning Department requires in order to determine 10 how much square footage can be built on a particular 11 property.

12 Now, Mr. Tokunaga told us at the hearing, at the public hearing, that we could not talk about the 13 14 fact that this property will not comply with the 15 Baseline Hillside Ordinance for square-footage purposes 16 because that's just for the Planning Department or the 17 Building Department to determine after the variance issues are determined, but the fact is he did not have 18 19 the slope analysis map.

20 Commissioner Donovan mentioned one of the 21 objectives of the plan is to preserve existing views. 22 Well, one of the existing views is from Stone Canyon 23 Road. This is a major entrance and exit to Bel Air, 24 and this house, like the 360 house, will tower above 25 that roadway.

And I want to also point out that the applicant at the hearing before Mr. Tokunaga -- and I expect the applicant to say it again today -- says that the property is in a bowl.

First of all, this land was sort of foothill 5 6 land. It sloped upward gradually. You can see by --7 well, you were -- many of you were on the same 8 Commission that approved the parcel map. What they did -- you -- I don't want to repeat what you already 9 10 know, but I have to make it for the record. Thev 11 installed a massive 1700 -- sorry -- I think around a 12 750-foot double retaining wall roughly 17 to 20 feet in height. They've chopped off the back of the hill. 13 14 They graded the property. They raised the grade of the 15 property. And, now, we have essentially a flat pad that rises upward gradually. This is not in a bowl. 16

And I'd like to provide the Commission with the applicant's own retaining wall exhibit from the January hearing in 2013. Just a moment.

20 COMMISSIONER HALPER: Excuse me. You know, 21 it's very difficult for me and, I think, other members 22 of the Commission to be able to absorb documents in 23 lieu of a --

24 MR. MARMON: I completely understand.
25 COMMISSIONER HALPER: Yeah.

1	MR. MARMON: I'm sorry. I didn't mean to
2	interrupt you. No. I appreciate that. But the point
3	that I will make orally to you, Stone Canyon Road, as
4	shown on this exhibit that I've provided to you and
5	there's some blowups so that you can see it
6	Stone Canyon Road ranges from an elevation of 478 feet
7	at the southwest corner of the property to 490 feet at
8	the corner of Stone Canyon and Bellagio. The finished
9	floor of the house, where you will see the house from
10	for the most part except for the west side where you
11	will see the full height of the house because of the
12	basement being exposed, is at 494.30. So the house
13	itself is not in a bowl. The house is actually above
14	Stone Canyon Road, which is the location that most
15	people will see the house.
16	And it's clear that the Commission understands
17	the Baseline Hillside Ordinance. I'd just like to

18 provide an ex- -- I'd just like to read very briefly an 19 excerpt from the City Attorney's report to the Council when the City Council adopted the Baseline Hillside 20 21 Ordinance. It says, "The current method of calculating 22 height gives developers incentive to build large, tall, 23 box-like structures in the hillsides, which many 24 communities have specifically identified as a problem. 25 Thus, the existing regulations discourage the terracing

1 of structures up and down a slope. By contrast, the 2 proposed ordinance would encourage such terracing as a 3 design feature and would visually break up the massive 4 buildings. The proposed ordinance would also utilize a method of calculating height which follows the slope of 5 the lot referenced in the proposed ordinance as 6 7 envelope height and encourage buildings to step up and 8 down a hillside and resulting in" -- "and results in a more aesthetically pleasing development." 9 10 So I'd just like to conclude by saying that --11 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Okay. 12 MR. MARMON: -- this property is not 13 significantly different from the other properties, the 14 360. The applicant has not made -- provided evidence 15 sufficient to make the findings. You'll see in the 16 proposed findings that I provided that there are 17 numerous errors of fact and law as well as abuse of discretion, and we request that you grant the appeal 18 19 and reverse the granting of the variance. Thank you. 20 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Thank you. Anv 21 questions? I will provide a copy of the City 22 MR. MARMON: 23 Attorney's Report. 24 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Are there any questions 25 for Mr. Marmon at this time? No? Okay. 35

1 Okay. The applicant has five minutes. I 2 have -- I don't know if I'm going to pronounce this 3 correctly -- Dveirin, Mr. Brant Dveirin. 4 MR. DVEIRIN: Yeah. 5 MR. LO: If I may, I think I filled out the 6 wrong side. 7 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: You can talk to the staff. 8 MR. MARMON: We do have other speakers. 9 Is 10 that permitted or not? 11 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: It happens -- it 12 happens after. 13 MR. MARMON: Sorry. 14 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: The appellant goes. 15 The applicant goes, and then we have the speakers for 16 and against. So, if you can, state your name and 17 address for the record, please. 18 MR. DVEIRIN: Yes. 19 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: You have five minutes. MR. DVEIRIN: I'm Brant Dveirin with the law 20 21 firm of Lewis, Brisbois, Bisgaard & Smith. I'm the 22 representative for the applicant M & A Gabaee. I have 23 with me at these tables my architect, project manager, 24 land use consultant, and another attorney from my firm 25 if there are any questions.

I always understood this to be about 1 2 10550 Bellagio, not 360. I think that's what we should 3 be looking at. I do believe that it's pretty clear that the properties are different. The -- one thing we 4 have to recognize with 360 is at the time when that 5 application was done, there was a huge issue regarding 6 7 the stream, that it was going to be covered, and that 8 characterized and invaded that whole process.

9 That is no longer the case. We're preserving 10 the stream. That was asked for us to do. We're doing 11 that, and because of that, this site requires us to be 12 55 feet away from Stone Canyon.

So I take issue with the fact that this idea that you are going to see this driving along Stone Canyon -- I was there the other day. The cars zip along there. There's already a stone wall there. There's going to be some ironwork on top of that. So I just don't think that's correct.

19 I submitted some photos. Hopefully, everybody got to see it. I understand that everybody -- at least 20 21 two people have said they've been to the site. They 22 say photos are worth a thousand words, and I agree with 23 If you look at the photos, particularly that. 24 Photos No. 1, 4, and 10, you can see in Photo No. 1, for example, just how far --25

1	COMMISSIONER FOSTER: What exhibit excuse
2	me. What exhibit is this?
3	MR. DVEIRIN: These are the photos I
4	COMMISSIONER FOSTER: Oh, okay. You
5	(Simultaneous speaking.)
б	MR. DVEIRIN: The first photo shows you just
7	how far this property is from the from the
8	Stone Canyon, which is on the other side of that wall.
9	None of that none of that property between the
10	bottom of this picture and the stone wall can be used.
11	That has to be preserved at least 55 feet, in some
12	places more, further away from that wall.
13	If you look at the picture on page 4 the
14	picture on page 4, at the top, there's a little
15	building at the top. That's part of 33 [sic] Copa de
16	Oro Road, which is Mr. Marmon's client's property.
17	That's not her house. That's some art studio.
18	It's barely visible to this property with that
19	vegetation. This property sits I don't know if you
20	want to call it a bowl, but it has a huge wall behind
21	it. It has it's below the grade of the street.
22	None of the properties that surround it on the east and
23	on the north can see virtually anything on this
24	property except some of the roof, and it won't matter
25	whether that roof is 40 feet, 39 feet, 60 feet. They

1	can't see it. That's why you need to go out to the
2	property. That's why these pictures are important.
3	Essentially, what you have out there is you
4	have a slope that goes like this. It slopes down to
5	the stream. Then you have a flat roof. So the part to
6	my right is going to be a little bit higher than the
7	part to my left. So it's only the part of the home
8	that's closest to the stream that's going to be
9	50 feet. Eighty-two percent of this property is going
10	to be at the 36 feet. Eighteen percent is going to be
11	at 50 feet, and it's only this one part.
12	When we get into the detail of this, we have a
13	substantially difficult site to build on. Only
14	65 percent of that site can be used for building. The
15	rest of it has to be preserved because of the stream,
16	which we agreed to do. Because of that imposition, we
17	are entitled to seek a variance.
18	One of the most basic things under American
19	law is a property owner to use his property to his
20	desire and maximum use under the law, and the law
21	allows him to apply for a variance. And if you meet
22	the requirements for a variance, you are entitled to
23	get it. And I believe, based on what the zoning
24	administrator outlined in the in the determination,
25	that we've met the requirements for a variance.

I don't think it's particularly helpful to say that these properties -- this should be treated exactly the same way as 360 because -- because, at the time that we did 360, we had a stream issue that we don't have on Bellagio. We didn't have the -- we didn't have the same information regarding the site. This site is -- information is different.

8 And I really believe that if we look at the particular opposition that we have in this case and 9 10 that we had in Stone Canyon, you will see, in light of 11 the two letters that I submitted today, one from the 12 homeowners association and one from another neighbor, is that we don't have opposition from the neighborhood. 13 14 We have opposition essentially from one neighbor, maybe 15 two neighbors. It's always the same neighbor, 16 Ms. Lazarof -- Lazarof. That's her right. But as her 17 attorney said, he's going to take the Stone Canyon case all the way to the Supreme Court. Good luck with that. 18 19 But the thing is, is that this is not about land use. It's personal, and it's typical. When 20 you're the last one to build in a lot that everybody is 21

used to seeing empty for a substantial period of time, certain people don't like it. I've seen it all over the city.

25

This dispute needs to stop. It needs to stop

1	here. It needs to stop now, and it needs your help to
2	approve this variance so we can finally put an end to
3	this and we can finish the job on Bellagio Road.
4	There was a comment made with respect to the
5	variance that somehow this site, you could you could
6	do a home, I guess, that's terraced or that is a
7	different height. And I suppose there's a lot of
8	things you can do on a particular site, but understand
9	this and I think this goes for a lot of projects in
10	the city as a matter of right, when this thing
11	started, he had a parcel map, and he had four lots, and
12	he could have built four houses on there to spec and
13	sold those lots. He's now building two larger homes on
14	two lots that he's going to live in, and I understand
15	one his brother is going to live in one of them.
16	This is a much less intensive use of this
17	site. It's not for profit. It's for personal use.
18	This is the type of thing we should support, not
19	oppose. This is what we want. We want people to
20	maximally use a site, not to create waste, at the same
21	time to do something that's attractive and to make sure
22	that you listen to the requirements of the City
23	regarding the stream, regarding the retaining walls,
24	regarding the landscaping. We've done all of that.
25	We've met all of the requirements.

1	So I would ask that the appeal be denied, that
2	the zoning administrator's determination be affirmed.
3	And if you have any specific questions, I'm here to
4	answer them, and if I can't, I have several of my
5	experts here. They can answer them as well.
6	COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Commissioner Donovan.
7	I have some questions. Now, it's my understanding I
8	know you are saying that the Stone Canyon property is
9	different from the Bellagio property, but it was my
10	understanding from the last the Stone Canyon
11	hearings that this well, first, let me ask you this:
12	The applicant has graded done preliminary grading on
13	both properties; correct?
14	MR. DVEIRIN: I believe that the applicant has
15	done preliminary grading on both properties. I've been
16	out there. There are pads there, yes.
17	COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: And he did them at the
18	same time?
19	MR. DVEIRIN: I don't know that.
20	COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Okay. Well, didn't
21	your client apply for the Bellagio variance at the same
22	time as the Stone Canyon variance?
23	MR. DVEIRIN: I believe that's correct. I
24	believe they were heard at different times. I believe
25	that there was an initial reapplication.
	42

1 Is that correct? 2 There were not just two. There were three 3 applications, one for a parcel map as well. 4 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: And the applicant's 5 prior representative at the last hearing at 6 Stone Canyon said that the grading on there actually 7 lowered the level of the property somewhat. 8 MR. DVEIRIN: I read the transcript. I do recall someone saying that. I don't believe it was --9 10 I don't believe that that was a significant change on 11 the site, but, yes, there was a change in grading. 12 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: So, in other words, to 13 some extent, if there is a bowl there, the applicant did some of the creation of that? 14 15 MR. DVEIRIN: Yeah, but I -- look, I don't --I don't doubt that there was some grading there, and I 16 17 don't doubt that some of that property may have been raised or lowered in order to create a pad, which is 18 19 not unusual. But the idea that this is a bowl is a misnomer. You can call it a bowl. What it really 20 21 is -- and if you go out there -- and it's in the photos that I submitted -- there is -- there are two retaining 22 23 walls and a large hill in the back, extremely dense 24 vegetation north and east on the site, and there is a 25 55-foot-imposed setback from the road on Stone Canyon

1	and Bellagio that limits you to 65 percent use of the
2	site. And because of that hill and because of the fact
3	that even with the minimal grading that occurred, that
4	the pads are below the street level, you can't see the
5	home that well, from Stone Canyon, and you certainly
6	can't see it from the homes that are blocked by the
7	vegetation. So there are no view impacts. That's
8	what's important.
9	COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: So I'm clear on this,
10	you are saying this property is not in a bowl, or is it
11	in a bowl?
12	MR. DVEIRIN: I'm saying it's below the street
13	level, and it's located
14	COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: But I'm using something
15	specific. Is it a bowl or not a bowl in a bowl?
16	MR. DVEIRIN: As I define a bowl, it is it
17	is it is backed up by a on a hill with
18	significant vegetation on the on the east side, and
19	it's below the street grade as it as it slopes
20	towards the west. Whether that's a bowl in your view
21	and my view, I don't know. I'm saying that's what it
22	is. It is below grade, and it's surrounded by a hill
23	and dense vegetation. You can call that a bowl, I
24	guess.
25	COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Okay. I noticed also
	44

1	that the height-variance request is to allow additional
2	height so the proposed residence can have a consistent
3	roof line for the entire home.
4	MR. DVEIRIN: Yes.
5	COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: That's so it for
6	aesthetic purposes?
7	MR. DVEIRIN: I would say that it is all
8	homes have to have aesthetic appeal for some reason or
9	other. I get that. I don't know if it's solely for
10	aesthetic purposes, but if your property slopes this
11	way towards this way towards the stream and you
12	want and your roof your roof, whether if
13	it's if it's an A-shaped roof, flat roof, whatever,
14	is going to be flat like this, you are going to have it
15	a little bit higher on this side, which is only
16	18 percent of the home. Eighty-two percent of this is
17	going to be at 36 feet.
18	But, yes, if you have a flat if you have a
19	consistent roof line and a and a and a slope this
20	way, you are going to have a little bit of a of a
21	of a higher property towards the towards the water
22	channel than you are away from the water channel.
23	COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: But you can build a
24	home on this property with a varied roof line; correct?
25	MR. DVEIRIN: I don't know. I'm not a
	45

1	builder. I'm a lawyer. I have an architect here. You
2	can ask him.
3	COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Okay. Well, we can get
4	back to that, then. But you have any other it
5	seems it seemed to me and I'll say, the prior
6	representative of your client admitted that this was
7	for aesthetic purposes, said it on the record, and so
8	I'm asking you, is this for aesthetic purposes?
9	MR. DVEIRIN: Not I don't believe anything
10	is solely done for aesthetic purposes because
11	because a roof also has structural integrity uses and
12	things like that, but, yes, all homes have an aesthetic
13	purpose, mine and yours.
14	COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Okay. And I note there
15	was no evidence presented to the ZA in the underlying
16	hearings here to the effect that your client cannot
17	build a home on this property unless he gets the
18	variance. You didn't present any you haven't
19	presented any evidence to the ZA or to us to the effect
20	that if you don't get this variance, you can't build a
21	home?
22	MR. DVEIRIN: What we've explained to the
23	zoning administrator and we've made clear in our
24	submittals is that this neighborhood is characterized
25	by large, estate-type homes. In order to have a large,
	46

1	estate-type home similar to our neighbors with the
2	amenities that all of our neighbors have such as tennis
3	courts and swimming pools, in order to do that with the
4	limited constraints of this site, that you can't use
5	35 percent of the site for building purposes, you need
6	to build a home in this way so that you can have the
7	same amenities. What our
8	COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: But that's not my
9	question. It's a very narrow question because it goes
10	to the heart of finding the factors to find a variance.
11	Can your client build an estate home on this
12	property without a variance? Yes or no?
13	MR. DVEIRIN: I don't think that's I think
14	if you
15	COMMISSIONER FOSTER: Yes or no?
16	MR. DVEIRIN: What?
17	COMMISSIONER FOSTER: Yes or no?
18	MR. DVEIRIN: No.
19	COMMISSIONER FOSTER: Okay.
20	COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: You cannot?
21	MR. DVEIRIN: No.
22	COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Okay.
23	MR. DVEIRIN: And I'm saying that the if
24	you look at what a variance is for, which is, by law, a
25	variance is to allow you to have the same use as your
	47

neighbors because of physical and other types of restraints on your property -- of course, it's a discretionary determination, but a variance isn't defined by whether or not you can build something smaller.

Of course, you can build something smaller 6 7 anywhere, but the idea is that in order to maximize the 8 use of your property, which is your right and my right and my client's right, you're entitled to seek a 9 10 variance. And if you can show, which we can, that this 11 site is severely constrained by its gradient and by its 12 size and that it won't impact the neighbors, we're not causing anybody any distress, if you stand -- and as 13 we've pointed out, if you stand on 333 Copa de Oro Road 14 15 on the first floor, you are looking 15 feet over the 16 roof line at 50 feet.

So we're not impacting any of our neighbors.
And because we have the severe restraints on the site,
it's within our right to seek a variance.

20 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Well, first of all, 21 Counsel, there's no doubt that your client is entitled 22 to seek a variance. Whether the client gets a variance 23 or not, nobody has impeded your client's right to seek 24 a variance thus far.

MR. DVEIRIN: That's correct.

25

1 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Okay. You now say you 2 cannot build an estate-like home without a variance. 3 What kinds of homes can you not build? 4 What can't you build here if you don't get this variance? 5 MR. DVEIRIN: I would ask my architect to 6 7 answer that question because that's -- that's beyond 8 my -- my pay grade, but -- but -- I -- I do think that -- that -- that anytime that you apply for a 9 10 variance -- anytime you apply for a variance, it's a 11 discretionary determination. And what I'm arguing for 12 is that we meet the requirements for you to exercise your discretion in favor of granting the variance. And 13 we are asking you to do that, but it's not a -- it's 14 15 not a mandatory determination. It's a discretionary determination. 16 17 And in order for my client to maximally -maximize the use of his property as his right in order 18 19 to have something similar to the estate-size homes that surround him, he needs the variance, but he can't get 20 it as a matter of right, which is why we're here. 21 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Commissioner Linnick. 22 23 But you were mentioning that he could have built four 24 homes, and --25 MR. DVEIRIN: Yes. 49

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

1 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: -- they obviously would 2 have been smaller, and they wouldn't have been the sort 3 of estate-like home that you are saying, you know, if 4 they build the two. So I'm kind of confused. I mean, 5 you are saying both -- sort of saying both things. 6 So --7 MR. DVEIRIN: They could have --COMMISSIONER LINNICK: -- I'm saying, they 8 could have just built the four homes, and --9 10 MR. DVEIRIN: What I'm saying is --11 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: -- I've got this 12 variance to make this home that is, like, similar to 13 the others in the neighborhood, you are saying? MR. DVEIRIN: My understanding -- and someone 14 15 on my side will correct me if I'm wrong -- is that the 16 City Planning Department wanted something different 17 than what he legally could do with the property; in other words, to tie the lots together, to put some --18 19 to put bigger homes on the property. 20 There's a difference between what you can 21 build as a matter of right and what is wise to build, 22 and -- and I'm saying is -- is that, all over the city, 23 there are instances where people seek approvals --24 I've -- I've --as -- I've done this before where --25 where -- where -- where people come out, and they --

1	they they don't like the particular project. And
2	one of the things that you need to make clear to the
3	opposition at times is that what you can do as a matter
4	of right, you might like less. That's what I'm saying.
5	COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Sure.
6	MR. DVEIRIN: What we can do as a matter of
7	right may not be as aesthetically and practical
8	practically pleasing, not only to us, but to our
9	neighbors. And I don't want that that fact lost on
10	this Commission because because what we're
11	essentially doing is a less dense use and a more
12	attractive use of this site than four smaller homes,
13	and I think that's something we should promote.
14	COMMISSIONER HALPER: Counselor,
15	Commissioner Halper. You refer to the fact that there
16	was a single resident or neighbor who was the
17	complaining source. I've got a number of the
18	letters
19	MR. DVEIRIN: Yes.
20	COMMISSIONER HALPER: that are complaints
21	from let me finish, please. I've got one here from
22	the Federation of Hillside and Canyon Associations,
23	which indicate that they represent 42 associations and
24	200,000 constituents, and asking us to enforce the
25	hillside ordinance. So I would say we the
	51

Commission is very sensitive to what the neighbors are 1 2 concerned with in our decision-making. It doesn't 3 appear -- do you want to make a comment back? 4 MR. DVEIRIN: No, no. What I'm saying is that 5 I'm aware of some other opposition. Primarily, we have 6 one consistent opposition who is behind us on the hill 7 at 333 Copa de Oro, which is Ms. Lazarof, who I 8 understand is ill today, and I hope she gets better. But that -- that -- that's what's driving this is that 9 10 single opposition. 11 But there are some other people that have sent 12 in letters, but that's not who is at every hearing, 13 opposed to everything that we've done on this property, and will be with us until this gets done. And I think 14 15 it needs to stop, and I need your help to make it stop. 16 And the only way we can get that to stop is to get this 17 variance finally approved. COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Commissioner Donovan. 18 19 Do you believe that the Stone Canyon case created precedent for the variance in this case? 20 21 MR. DVEIRIN: No. 22 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: So you are not 23 asserting that? 24 MR. DVEIRIN: No, no. No, not at all. Ι 25 think this case stands on its own. I think I'm here on 52

1	Bellagio. I'm not here on Stone Canyon.
2	COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: And you would agree
3	that the Bellagio property isn't the only property in
4	the vicinity that has a stream running through it?
5	MR. DVEIRIN: I don't know that for a fact.
б	COMMISSIONER FOSTER: I do. I do.
7	MR. DVEIRIN: I do know this, that that stream
8	is not just on that property. I don't know where else
9	it runs. I do know this, is that
10	COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: It runs down
11	Stone Canyon, doesn't it?
12	MR. DVEIRIN: Yes. But I'm saying that there
13	are other properties that I am aware of and I can't
14	cite their addresses that they have this stream, and
15	they've been able to cover it, build over it, do
16	various things with it. We are actually preserving it,
17	and because of our preservation of this, we have
18	imposed on us a 50 at least a 55-foot setback from
19	the property line in order to build on this site. That
20	makes this site usable only 65 percent of this site
21	is actually usable. That's one of the big constraints
22	of the site in addition to the slope that makes our
23	property not as usable as we would like and why we need
24	a variance to maximize the use of this property for my
25	client's purposes.

1	COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Commissioner Donovan
2	again. Your client's property isn't the only property
3	in the vicinity with varying elevations; correct?
4	MR. DVEIRIN: I don't know of any other
5	properties in that immediate vicinity that has a
б	16-foot difference in elevation within a mere couple of
7	feet of property. Remember that that this property
8	slopes down towards the stream at a fairly a fairly
9	steep slope. There is a 16-foot difference between the
10	west and the east. That 16-foot differential is what
11	accounts for it being 50 feet here and then the rest of
12	the property, the other 82 percent, just being the
13	36 feet. So that's a very steep differential.
14	I'm unaware, as I sit here today, of any other
15	properties in that immediate vicinity that has a
16	16-foot differential in a matter of a few feet.
17	COMMISSIONER FOSTER: Is it not true
18	Commissioner Foster that your client did the grading
19	on that property?
20	He did all of the grading and the backfill and
21	built the big retaining walls. He's had that property
22	for many years. Did he not know what the slope was?
23	He had no choice but to go along with the
24	preserving of the stream. That was something that this
25	Commission put on many years ago as an absolute. So
	54

1	when he bought this when he had the property, when
2	he went to design it, when he went to grade it, if he
3	knew about that, why didn't he do something at that
4	time when he had all of the grading done?
5	I've been to the site several times. I
6	remember the site when there was another home on it.
7	It's it's hard for me to imagine that these aren't
8	self-imposed conditions that he's put that he's put
9	on himself. He knew right off from the beginning
10	that the stream had a buffer zone, that he had to
11	plant
12	I mean, all of those things have been known
13	since before he designed the house. So it's difficult
14	for me to understand how, now that he knows all of
15	that, he wants a variance, because he could have
16	designed the house to go along with what was the
17	hillside ordinance and the stream preservation. All of
18	those things could have been taken into consideration.
19	I don't what I don't understand is why he didn't do
20	that. Just, a variance seemed easier?
21	MR. DVEIRIN: I don't I wouldn't
22	characterize this as "easy." By the way
23	COMMISSIONER FOSTER: Well, it was pretty easy
24	getting the one on 360 because it just got taken care
25	of in Council, you know.

MR. DVEIRIN: No, no.

2	COMMISSIONER FOSTER: We've spent a lot of
3	time on this ourselves as a Commission. We've spent a
4	lot of time looking, reading, and studying this. So
5	it's not something that we take lightly either, you
6	know. And it's not easy for you, I'm sure, and it's
7	not easy for your client. But, on the other hand, it
8	hasn't been easy for us either because we've spent a
9	really lot of time reading through all of this
10	material, and so, you know, we are trying to do the
11	right thing for everybody. So that's
12	MR. DVEIRIN: I don't know my understanding
13	from looking at the documents is that, when this
14	originally got started, there was a lot of time and
15	effort put into covering the stream okay? not
16	preserving the stream.
17	COMMISSIONER FOSTER: Right.
18	MR. DVEIRIN: Then there was a change to
19	preserving the stream. That's what I gathered from the
20	documents, that that, originally, there was a belief
21	that you could have a much deeper, longer pad than what
22	you have out there now.
23	When I was out there the other day, two weeks
24	ago, looking at this, for me the first time and walking
25	off that 55 feet, it's pretty clear that it's a
	56

1	severely restricted building pad. Almost 50 percent of
2	your lot is not usable, and that requires a certain
3	type of design if you are going to have homes like what
4	surround you and are behind you.
5	COMMISSIONER FOSTER: Okay. I think we
6	understand that. Yeah. Okay.
7	MR. DVEIRIN: So, yes, I think it's he
8	graded yes, he bought the property, but I think
9	what I keep getting back to and I think is important is
10	that the most fundamental of American rights is to use
11	your property to its maximum use within the law
12	COMMISSIONER FOSTER: Right.
13	MR. DVEIRIN: and that, based on a very
14	detailed job done by the zoning administrator, we can
15	meet the requirements of the variance.
16	I think that the detail with which the zoning
17	administrator dealt with this is in response to the
18	detail with which we addressed it, which is not the
19	same as what we did on Bellagio I mean, on
20	Stone Canyon. And I don't think they are exactly the
21	same, and I don't think we should let one invade the
22	other. And I'm not arguing that 360 has precedential
23	value of any kind.
24	What I'm saying is that this is exactly the
25	type of situation that someone would want a variance on
	57

1 and should get a variance. So I'm asking for your help 2 for him because he -- in order to make this work and to 3 have something similar to the neighbors, he needs the 4 variance, and he can't get it other than through your 5 discretionary approval. Thank you. 6 COMMISSIONER FOSTER: Okay. COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Commissioner Donovan. 7 Just to be clear on this --8 9 MR. DVEIRIN: Yes, sir. 10 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: -- you are asserting 11 that this property has the greatest degree in varying 12 elevations of any other properties in the vicinity? MR. DVEIRIN: I don't know that for a fact. 13 14 I'm saying is -- is that when I was out there and when 15 I looked around and drove around, I'm unaware of any properties that have a 16-foot differential --16 17 personally unaware, in that immediate area, including around the hills and behind him and on the other side 18 19 of the golf course, that -- that have a 16-foot differential in such a short pad. That's what I'm 20 saying, and that's part of the difficulty of this site. 21 22 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: All right. So that's 23 your personal impression. You don't have any evidence 24 to that effect? MR. DVEIRIN: No, I don't have -- I don't have 25 58

1 any evidence other than what I saw. 2 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Okay. Thank you. 3 MR. DVEIRIN: Thank you. COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Commissioner Linnick. 4 5 If you could bring up your architect, that would be I don't know if -- some of the questions --6 great. 7 COMMISSIONER FOSTER: Why don't we wait and 8 hear some more and then --COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Do you want to --9 COMMISSIONER FOSTER: -- ask the architect 10 11 some questions --12 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Okay. 13 COMMISSIONER FOSTER: -- after we hear some 14 testimony just -- unless you have something immediate 15 you want to ask the architect. COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Well, I wanted to ask 16 17 about -- the same question I asked of Mr. Tokunaga 18 about the plot plan and the -- you know, whether or 19 not --COMMISSIONER FOSTER: Oh. Go ahead. I'm 20 21 sorry. 22 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: -- those things were 23 provided, the slope analysis. 24 COMMISSIONER FOSTER: The architect? 25 MR. DVEIRIN: Yeah, the architect would be 59

1 better to answer that --2 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Okay. 3 MR. DVEIRIN: -- than me. COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Yeah. Just be quick. 4 MR. DVEIRIN: I know we are all aware of the 5 I'm not familiar with the specific slope 6 slope. 7 analysis. 8 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Okay. Okay. 9 COMMISSIONER FOSTER: Sorry. I just --10 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: No. That's okay. 11 MR. DVEIRIN: Do you want the architect? 12 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: That would be great. 13 Thank you. 14 MR. DVEIRIN: Yeah. He's here. 15 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Sure. 16 State your name and address for the record, 17 please. MR. LO: Roland Lo, 9034 Sunset Boulevard in 18 19 West Hollywood. COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Commissioner Linnick. 20 21 I just wanted to ask you the same question I had asked 2.2 of staff --23 MR. LO: Sure. 24 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: -- about whether or not 25 there was a slope analysis presented to the planning 60

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1	staff and whether there was a plot plan.
2	MR. LO: I have no knowledge of the slope band
3	analysis, but, generally, the slope band analysis is
4	required, you know, during the plan-check process.
5	That's an item that is technically reviewed by the
б	Planning Department for the appropriate size of the
7	building, FAR. I don't know if that's that was
8	requested by the ZA on this particular case.
9	COMMISSIONER LINNICK: But
10	Commissioner Linnick. So, when you were designing, you
11	didn't have the benefit of a
12	MR. LO: We have a preliminary slope analysis
13	saying that you this this is a maximum because
14	the site let's come back to it. The site is two
15	lots. It's about roughly 2.1 acres. So that's 80,000
16	square feet. The footprint of the building is really
17	about 12,000 square feet. That's about 15 percent lot
18	coverage. Fifteen percent, that's I believe the
19	Code allows you for 30 percent or 35 percent lot
20	coverage. I'm not I've got to verify that for sure.
21	But the slope band analysis is it will be
22	an item that will be technically approved by the
23	Planning Department during the plan-check process. So
24	I am aware of a big number, a number for a maximum
25	square footage, but I believe what we have designed is

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1	within the maximum allowed square footage for this
2	particular site.
3	COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Do you have a question?
4	COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: I have a question.
5	COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Oh. Well, I was just
6	going to so back to Commissioner Linnick. So
7	back to the question of, you know, were there other
8	designs, you know, we heard from appellant's we had
9	testimony from appellant's architect about, you know,
10	another design that could give you, you know, a
11	wonderfully a wonderful estate-like, you know, home
12	that would be similar to those in the neighborhood
13	without doing without asking for the variance.
14	MR. LO: That is an aesthetics from architect
15	to architect.
16	COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Sure.
17	MR. LO: So it's a very subjective issue.
18	But, for a fact, an estate my understanding of an
19	estate site, a building, is that there are pitched
20	roofs, you know, a great motor court, backyard, a
21	great, large backyard. The pitched roof is actually a
22	functional and around the Bel Air area, the pitched
23	roof is very common for these French-chateau type of
24	buildings. So it's a functional thing where, you know,
25	you quickly shed water. I mean, it's really a
	62

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functional thing, and, also, it's a good way of 1 2 locating mechanical equipment and exhaust equipment 3 that's up there. So, you know, in terms of it being solely on 4 aesthetics, I don't believe this is solely aesthetic 5 6 reasons why -- that you -- you know, that -- that 7 this -- this variance is granted. So what it is, it is 8 an opinion from architect to architect that -- you know, what constitutes an estate, but I do believe that 9 10 this building does -- this house does -- contextually 11 is very responsive to the surrounding neighborhoods. 12 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Commissioner Donovan. 13 There are some questions that your attorney said you 14 had to answer. So I'm going to ask them. 15 MR. LO: I'm going to try my best. 16 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Okay. Are you -- are 17 you saying that you could not design a home on this property without the need of a variance? 18 19 MR. LO: Without the need of a variance? The property is constrained, you know, by the way it's 20 21 being sited. I have got to actually -- you have to go 22 to the site and actually take a look at it. That's a 23 yes-or-no question. Am I correct? 24 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: (Inaudible response.) 25 MR. LO: This circumstance is no.

1 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: You cannot design a 2 home on this property without getting a height 3 variance? 4 MR. LO: In this particular -- the way it's 5 sited, no. COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: And tell me why you 6 7 can't design a home --8 MR. LO: Because the --COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: -- that's going to be 9 10 within the height limit. 11 MR. LO: Because the motor court is -- you 12 know, the motor court is facing the street, and the way the site is being situated, the building has to situate 13 a particular location for, you know -- for the 14 15 circulation to actually function. So, in this 16 particular case, in this particular design, no. 17 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: So the only reason you can't do it is because of the location of the motor 18 19 court? 20 MR. LO: No. Various reasons of siting the 21 site. There's, you know -- you've got -- you've got 22 sun. You've got wind. You've got solar access. 23 You've got all of these other reasons. So, in this 24 particular location --25 Any architect can tell you, you know, that 64

1 there is an alternative design to it, you know. 2 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Okay. That's what I'm 3 speaking to. I mean, let's see if I can be more 4 accurate -- I mean, specific. 5 Are you saying it's impossible to design a 6 home --7 MR. LO: Oh, no. 8 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: -- on this property? MR. LO: No. No, I'm not saying that 9 10 whatsoever. 11 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: So you could design a 12 home with a varied roof level; correct? 13 MR. LO: Varied roof level, yes. 14 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Okay. And you could 15 design a home on this property that would not need a 16 height variance; correct? It's possible; correct? 17 MR. LO: It's possible if it is -- you are talking about a hypothetical scenario. Yes. 18 19 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: And the varied roof 20 line, you said the reason why that won't --21 First of all, one of the reasons you want a consistent roof line is aesthetics. That's one reason; 22 23 correct? 24 MR. LO: Aesthetics and --25 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Yeah, how it looks. 65

1 MR. LO: -- contextually responsive to the 2 surrounding neighbors. Yes. 3 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Yes. Tt's a 4 subjective, aesthetic viewpoint; correct? 5 MR. LO: Yes. COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Okay. And --6 7 MR. LO: And we can't discuss aesthetics. 8 It's really subjective in reality, you know. 9 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Aesthetics are always 10 subjective. 11 MR. LO: Yes. 12 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Yes, of course. All 13 right. So -- all right. I guess I have no further 14 questions. Thank you. 15 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Okay. Thank you. So 16 now we have --17 MR. DVEIRIN: Do you have any questions for me, or do you want to hear from the other speakers? 18 19 COMMISSIONER FOSTER: We are ready. COMMISSIONER LINNICK: No. I think we are 20 21 good. 22 MR. DVEIRIN: Okay. Thank you. 23 So let's COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Thank you. 24 hear from speakers for the appeal. I have Jon Perica 25 or Perica and then John Murdock, then 66

Tania Hackbarth -- Hackbarth.

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2 Name and address for the record. You have two3 minutes.

JON PERICA: Jon Perica, 10338 Etiwanda Avenue, Northridge, California 91326. I'm a retired zoning administrator. Commissioners know that all five variance findings have to be made. The zoning administrator made none of the required variance findings. I'm going to pick on two of those.

No. 3, evidence of a right to a 50-foot-built house generally possessed by other property owners in the same zone. The applicant lists no other examples of houses that have the same zone, the same vicinity, the same measuring distance, and the same type of use to justify a previous precedent.

16 The ZA's findings relate to characteristics of the lot and topography, not any other precedential 17 By not citing another precedent of a previous 18 cases. 19 grant similar to what's being asked for, this finding cannot be made. The inability of the zoning 20 administrator to provide a precedent finding also 21 22 occurred at the adjacent property at 360 Stone Canyon 23 Road, owned by the same family partnership. This 24 adjacent property has very similar topography and 25 features, and that was denied twice by your

condition -- Commission last year.

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2 In that previous decision on the adjacent 3 Stone Canyon variance request, the ZA found that the precedential -- that no precedential height grant 4 exists in the record previously in the community that 5 can be used as an example to justify granting this 6 7 particular case. There is absolutely no justification 8 for this finding submitted by the zoning administrator or the applicants. 9

Finding No. 1, identifying a city hard- -- a city-created hardship that can only be overcome by a variance. As your Commission has already noted, the applicant was not forced by the City to purchase this property. Due diligence would have indicated what the exact limitations on the property that was buildable could have been for that.

17 The applicant had a choice of what the building footprint was, where to locate it, and he 18 19 chose to make this particular location. At this point, a noted architect has submitted a letter to you that 20 there are at least four other alternatives to build the 21 22 same size house on the property. I think that's a 23 valid compromise. The applicant gets a house similar 24 to what he wants in size. The neighbors aren't 25 burdened by another precedent.

1	As a zoning administrator, I've seen too many
2	examples of bad grants that other developers use to
3	say, "Well, the City granted that this time. I'm
4	entitled to the same thing." So I have that historical
5	long view for that.
6	COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Okay. Your time has
7	run.
8	JON PERICA: Thank you so much.
9	COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Okay. Thank you.
10	John Murdock, then Tania Hackbarth, and then Mr. Fisk.
11	Name and address for the record.
12	JOHN MURDOCK: Good evening, Madam President,
13	members of the Commission. My name is John Murdock. I
14	am an attorney, 1209 Pine Street, Santa Monica. I am
15	not being paid to be here. I'm actually speaking on my
16	own behalf, although I must say I'm biased because I do
17	represent this property owner in the litigation that's
18	pending on the adjacent property. Mr. Marmon and I
19	have filed a petition for a writ of mandate.
20	And I am here to say, as a member of the
21	public, I am extremely outraged at what happened in
22	this companion case with the use and, I would call it,
23	the misuse of Section 245.
24	I've been through the whole history of that
25	case, and I've been through all of the paper in this
	69

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

1	case. There really isn't a difference. There's no
2	topographical difference. There's nothing that
3	distinguishes this case from that case. Your findings
4	were completely correct when you denied the variance or
5	upheld the zoning administrator's denial of a variance.
б	The same zoning administrator denied the
7	variance, and why is he granting the variance here?
8	Let's be real. The City Council reversed his decision
9	and said, "Here are the findings we want for this
10	property." Those findings are bogus. I guarantee you
11	they will be overturned in court.
12	Now, the applicant is here to ask you to do
13	the same thing, a set of bogus findings. You already
14	have pinpointed the main issue. Can you build a house?
15	Well, finally, you got a concession. "Yes, we can
16	build a house." That's it. It's all over. They must
17	make every one of the five findings.
18	When counsel says, "This is discretionary, and
19	please help us maximize the use of this property,"
20	that's completely wrong. It's not discretionary. It's
21	mandatory that the findings be made. And the courts
22	have consistently said, "It should be hard to get a
23	variance. It's not easy to get a variance." And
24	Councilmember Koretz was completely out of line because
25	how that happened, he came to the City Council at the

1	last minute. He didn't comply with the Brown Act. He
2	didn't agendize his request. He said, "Oh, I found out
3	too late, just Friday, about this decision."
4	His deputy, the same deputy, was at your
5	hearing. He knew that you had denied the variance.
6	Your letter went to his office. So how could he come
7	to the Council and excuse his violation of the
8	Brown Act by saying he didn't know about it?
9	That's completely abusive in my view, and that
10	led to the remand. You again denied it, and then he
11	took it up again. I guarantee you are going to deny
12	this, and he's going to take it up, and we'll be right
13	there. Thank you.
14	COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Ms. Hackbarth and then
15	Dan Fisk and then Steve Twining or Twining.
16	Name and address for the record. You have two
17	minutes.
18	TANIA HACKBARTH: Good evening.
19	Tania Hackbarth, 300 Stone Canyon Road. I am the
20	property owner directly next door to 360 Stone Canyon.
21	I submitted a letter, which you all have and you've all
22	read. First off, I'd like to compliment all four of
23	you. I've been listening very intently to your very,
24	in my opinion, correct questioning and your very
25	accurate overview to look at this the way you have
	71
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looked at it, and I want to compliment you on your very
wise questions that you've put forth this evening.
I've listened to this site being described as
a bowl, and in my mind, a bowl goes like this. Just a
womanly observation, to me, this is more like a saucer.
It's not even a bowl. It's more flat than what the
what the applicant wants everybody to believe.
The 55 feet that he's talking about, that the
structure has to be pushed back 55 feet because of the
stream, et cetera, et cetera, to build the type of home
that he wants to build, one would normally do that
anyway to create a beautiful driveway, to create
beautiful landscaping, to create beautiful hardscape so
that you have a presence going up to a seemingly
beautiful house.
So I don't see that this 55 foot that he has
to bring this property back as being a detriment but
more being something that would logically need to be
designed anyway to create a beautiful frontage.
He also talked about how there's no other
properties in the neighborhood that have a significant
differential, and my property has an even stronger
differential, and I'm right next door. Plus, I've
observed other homes along Stone Canyon Road that have
observed other homes along Stone Canyon Road that have differentials. So I would like to point out that it's

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1	my observation that I have found many properties that
2	have differentials that have managed to build beautiful
3	homes and taking the stream into consideration.
4	My only my only other comment and I
5	truly believe this is that the reason that we are
б	all here today is that this applicant is once again
7	trying to obtain a special privilege that no other
8	homeowner is allowed to have. You we have in
9	Los Angeles a Baseline Mansionization Ordinance.
10	Everybody has to work within those guidelines. And I
11	want to plead to you one more time to deny his appeal
12	and to uphold the Mansionization Ordinance, which you
13	have put forward. Some other thoughts
14	COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Okay. Well, your time
15	ran.
16	TANIA HACKBARTH: Okay.
17	COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Commissioner Linnick.
18	I have a question. Does the stream does it
19	TANIA HACKBARTH: go right through my
20	property too?
21	COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Does your on your
22	property?
23	TANIA HACKBARTH: It goes right through my
24	property.
25	COMMISSIONER LINNICK: And how does your
	73

1 property treat the stream?

2	TANIA HACKBARTH: Well, our structures are
3	pushed back. Our structures and my home is 36 feet.
4	And our structures are pushed back.

5 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Okay. And I have a --6 TANIA HACKBARTH: And my home is a -- was 7 built -- newer built, 2000 -- it was built in 8 the 2000 -- you know, I don't exactly remember the 9 exact year, but it was between 2000 and 2005. So it's 10 a newer-built home. But the stream runs straight 11 through, and we hear that beautiful water going 12 straight through.

COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Well, I was --13 14 Commissioner Linnick. That was a question that I had 15 because the stream sounds like it's this huge burden, 16 but I would -- it would be lovely to have a stream on 17 my property. It would seem very estate-like, I would 18 think. So I'm glad to hear that, you know, you are 19 okay with -- the stream is okay. It's not like a 20 huge -- you like your stream. 21 TANIA HACKBARTH: Well, that's --22 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: She's, like, "No, I 23 don't really like my stream." 24 TANIA HACKBARTH: -- not even the point. 25 That's not even the point. The -- you know, what I --

1 what I basically just want to convey to you is that the 2 parameters with which he has to build with, you know, 3 he can certainly do it with complying with the ordinance, I believe, that is on the books, and I just 4 believe that he's asking for a special privilege. 5 And, 6 also, Stone Canyon Road -- and he's saying, well, only 7 18 percent of it is going to be 55 feet, and the 8 other --The problem is that the part that's going to 9 10 be 55 feet is on Stone Canyon Road. So as the 11 neighborhood drives through, up and down, they are 12 going to see this big towering structure, which is probably equivalent to a four- or five-story office 13 14 building, and that's -- you know, that's the reality. 15 As you drive down Stone Canyon Road, it's the front 16 half of it that he's saying is the 18 percent that needs to be 50-plus feet. 17 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: 18 Okay. Okay. Thank 19 you. Dan Fisk. H. Dan Fisk and then Mr. Twining. 20 H. DAN FISK: Yes. 21 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Name and address for the record. You have two minutes. 22 23 H. DAN FISK: My name is Dan Fisk. I live at 1527 Stone Canyon Road, just off of Stone Canyon Road. 24 25 My mailbox is there. Our home is on Tanner Bridge

1	Road. We have our property is called
2	"Stone Bridge." It's the principal part of the
3	original estate that started Bel Air, the
4	Doheny Estate. Later, Bel Air, as you know, was
5	developed by the Bell family.
6	I'm here pro bono. The last time I appeared
7	before a in a commission setting, I was on your side
8	of the podium as chairman of a planning commission and
9	city councilman.
10	I have some empathy for the property owners.
11	Philosophically, it's nice to be able to develop your
12	own property the way you want to, but those of us who
13	have been involved in land use planning know that if
14	you don't have rules to follow, you end up with a
15	hodgepodge community. And I share the comments that
16	have been made against the variance before me. I have
17	provided you with a letter that concisely states my
18	point of view on this.
19	Picking up off of what Tania said a few
20	minutes ago, I'm quite concerned that coming into
21	Bel Air on Stone Canyon Road or on Bellagio, which is
22	the marquee entrance into this beautiful community, I
23	don't want to see a commercial-like structure there
24	with that has the appearance of three or four
25	stories to be incompatible with all of the beautiful

1 architecture that we have in the community. I think 2 that would be a big mistake. And I have not seen any 3 indication that they've met the five criteria that 4 should be met in good land use planning to permit such a variance. 5 6 And so it is with that that I respectfully 7 oppose the issuance of the variance, and I would 8 appreciate the Commission carefully considering the points made in the letter that I have submitted. Thank 9 10 you very much. 11 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Thank you. Steve Twining. 12 H. DAN FISK: There is one further comment I 13 14 might make. I think, if you talk to Ms. Ferris --15 Tania, you'd find that the slope of her property is 16 very comparable to what the applicant has represented 17 their property has for their variance. 18 STEVE TWINING: Yes. My name is 19 Steve Twining. I live at 1535 Roscomare Road in Bel Air. I am a Bel Air resident and have been for 20 21 over 40 years. First of all, I'll say that a flat roof is 22 ugly in general. I'm speaking on behalf of the 23 24 Hillside Federation. You got the document. I won't 25 have to read, but I especially refer you to page 2. 77

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

1	This instance is a blatant political there's blatant
2	political influence on the zoning administrator to
3	change his mind from 360 to this property even though
4	they are adjacent, and I have I believe, if I'm not
5	incorrect, it was a councilman who wanted to preserve
б	the stream. Is that is that true?
7	SHAWN BAYLISS: He's supportive of it. The
8	previous councilmember was in office when we got that.
9	STEVE TWINING: But what is a current the
10	current councilman is in support of the stream.
11	Is that correct?
12	SHAWN BAYLISS: He certainly is.
13	STEVE TWINING: Thank you.
14	In the prior case, the top floor was on one
15	hand, it was for utilities, air-conditioning and so on.
16	On the other hand, it was for aesthetics. This
17	property will clearly be visible from Stone Canyon, and
18	I also want to say that the Hillside Federation
19	represents 42 homeowner associations. They are listed
20	on the left side. If I had more time, I would read
21	them to you, but you don't need you are capable of
22	seeing those.
23	So the fact of the matter is that there are
24	hillside residents and I would say the majority
25	that would be opposed to this variance. Thank you.
	78

1	COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Thank you. Okay. We
2	have rebuttal time unless counsel
3	COMMISSIONER FOSTER: There's nobody opposing?
4	COMMISSIONER LINNICK: No. There's that's
5	all that I have.
6	Was there anyone I don't have any speaker
7	cards in favor of the or against the appeal. Okay.
8	I don't know if Mr. Bayliss would you like to go
9	before or after rebuttal?
10	SHAWN BAYLISS: I can go now.
11	COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Okay. Mr. Bayliss.
12	SHAWN BAYLISS: Shawn Bayliss, planning and
13	land use guy for Councilmember Paul Koretz' office.
14	There's definitely been a lot said here this evening.
15	The main takeaway points that we look at "we" being
16	in our office this is an irregular-shaped lot. A
17	lot of them are in Bel Air. It has a stream that runs
18	down it that, as it has been discussed, some properties
19	have. That stream is actually mandated to maintain by
20	order of this Commission. On top of that, it also has
21	an additional 15-foot buffer on top of it as mandated
22	by this Commission. It runs down the entire length of
23	this property.
24	Over 30 percent of the property is unusable
25	because of the river, the creek, the setbacks, the
	79

hillside. One part of the Baseline Hillside 1 2 Ordinance -- something that we try to avoid is grading 3 into the hillsides. If you were to push this home 4 back, you further tear into the hillside. I don't 5 think Mrs. Lazarof would be a fan of that, nor would 6 anybody. 7 Mr. Twining is correct. The Councilmember is a staunch supporter of the preservation of that creek, 8 does not want it touched, and let the applicant know 9 10 loud and clear that the request for it to be moved from 11 the tract map was not a good idea. 12 Knowing the limitations that the City has 13 placed on this project and that a small portion, 14 roughly 18 to 20 percent of it, reaches that 15 36 percent, our office feels that those findings can be 16 made. We felt that the situation was actually similar 17 to the other one, which is why we took the route that 18 we did, and we support the applicant's request here as 19 well. 20 I'm more than happy to take questions, address 21 anything you want me to talk about. COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Okay. Thank you. 22 23 Okay. SHAWN BAYLISS: 24 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Now we are going to 25 have rebuttal from both the applicant and the

1 appellant, two minutes. Does the applicant want to 2 come forward and have two minutes, Mr. Dveirin? 3 MR. DVEIRIN: Thank you, Ms. Linnick. A 4 couple quick points.

First of all, the way this thing, as I pointed 5 6 out, goes down to the stream and the roof is the 7 same -- it's the same elevation. The hardship -- and I don't know if I made this clear -- is that the 8 requirement is that you measure the height five feet 9 10 from the lowest point. It's because of that 11 requirement that it's -- he deserves a variance 12 because, when you have to use that for the measuring 13 point, it only makes that one portion 50 feet. The house isn't all 50 feet, but it's the artificial 14 15 constraint of the measurement five feet from the lowest point that makes this difficult. We shouldn't lose 16 17 sight of that.

There are -- in the ZA's determination, there 18 19 are a list of properties that have similar variances 20 that have been granted to numerous properties that surround us. We are not asking for anything that other 21 22 people don't normally get when they are developing on 23 this type of property. As I said to you when I was up 24 here, the problem is -- this is no different than when 25 I represented the Groman [ph] brothers, who were

building on the last lot at some fancy tract up on Mulholland. And all of the neighbors came out because they wanted to look over their lot. When you're last, you hardly ever get the same modifications and variances that your neighbors have.

6 There are no other properties that I'm aware 7 of that are under this type of constraint that have to 8 measure under this ordinance, with this sort of 16-foot 9 differential, and then pay the price for the entire 10 house. That's what makes this stand out. That's why 11 it's difficult. That's why you should support the 12 variance and deny the appeal.

My understanding about the hillside group, they have no jurisdiction here. I don't believe the gentleman who spoke to you is actually on that board. I don't fully understand why they're here. The Mansionization Ordinance, my understanding, doesn't apply here.

19 If you want to talk mansionization, let's go 20 to my neighborhood just south of the Mormon temple. 21 I've got a mansionization problem. I've got big houses 22 next to my little house on Holmby. That's not what 23 this is about, but I understand what she's talking 24 about.

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I think Mr. Bayliss is correct. This was

1 imposed on us. We are happy to deal with it, but it 2 does constrain this property. And with that, I'd ask 3 that you support the variance, deny the appeal, and 4 affirm the zoning administrator's very detailed and dedicated work. Thank you. 5 6 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Thank you. Any 7 questions? No. Okay. Mr. Marmon, two minutes. Name 8 for the record, please. 9 COMMISSIONER FOSTER: Don't touch it. MR. MARMON: My name is Victor Marmon. 10 11 Do I have to give my office address, 12 et cetera? No. That's fine. 13 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: 14 MR. MARMON: Okay. First, measuring five feet 15 out from the perimeter of the property is not a It's the law. It's been the law since 1993 16 hardship. 17 with the original hillside ordinance. It is the law today. 18 19 Second, measuring from that point is not the -- the way the building envelope works. 20 The 21 building envelope goes up the grade along with the 22 property. You can keep your 36-foot height if you move 23 up the grade and terrace your house. 24 There was some discussion about how much 25 grading was done at the property. I have a letter from

1	Mr. Tokunaga, granting a waiver of a tract map, where
2	he states that the previous approved amounts were
3	17,430 cubic yards of cut, 494,000 [sic] cubic yards of
4	fill, and 2,936 feet of export. The
5	Mr. Dveirin talked about the house having a
б	flat roof. Think about it. A flat roof, the limit is
7	30 feet, not 36 feet. You are talking about a 20-foot
8	variance, a 50-foot variance instead of a 30-foot
9	house.
10	Again, Mr. Dveirin talked about the pad being
11	below. The pad is above street level. He talked so
12	I'm not sure if it was Mr. Dveirin or someone else
13	talked about preservation was imposed on us. It was
14	part of the conditions of a four-lot subdivision. It
15	was agreed to voluntarily when the map was recorded.
16	This is not an imposition. It was a voluntary
17	agreement.
18	And, then, there was reference to the Baseline
19	Mansionization Ordinance. I think that was a mistaken
20	reference. We all know it was the Baseline Hillside
21	Ordinance.
22	And, finally, there is no additional 15-foot
23	buffer. There is a stream which you can't go
24	affect, and then there's a 10-foot vegetation buffer.
25	There is no 15-foot buffer.

1 Thank you very much. Thank you for your time 2 on this. I know you spent a lot of time on it. 3 Thanks. 4 COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Thank you. 5 Okay. Does anyone have any questions for 6 anyone? 7 Okay. We are going to close the public 8 hearing and begin deliberations. COMMISSIONER HALPER: Commissioner Halper. 9 Ιf 10 I may start. I am always reluctant to oppose a 11 councilman's presentation from a council district. 12 They are the elected official, and I respect them 13 greatly. I also am -- would like to satisfy the needs of a homeowner to build what he wants. 14 15 And I do resent the implication that 16 Mr. Tokunaga is being acted on in a political manner 17 because I believe he's a distinguished professional. However, I don't believe that the findings were made in 18 19 a manner which satisfy me. I think they were fairly weak, and for that reason, I have reservations about 20 21 the project. COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Commissioner Donovan. 22 I haven't heard any facts in this case that 23 24 differentiate from our ruling in the Stone -- in the 25 Stone Canyon case, and I agree with 85

1 Commissioner Halper. It is with great reluctance that 2 I disagree with a distinguished councilmember and 3 frankly with anybody from the Planning Department, and 4 I do that with the utmost respect. And I cast no 5 aspersions whatsoever on the planning staff or 6 Mr. Tokunaga at all, whatsoever, for his findings. He 7 calls them as he sees them. That's the way I see it, but I just see them differently in this case. 8

COMMISSIONER FOSTER: Commissioner Foster. 9 Ι 10 agree with what's been said by Commissioner Halper and 11 Commissioner Donovan. I have seen nothing that changes 12 the conditions. I see no reason why this house couldn't have been -- knowing the owner had the home 13 since we made the ruling -- I think it was 2006 --14 15 there's, to me, no real reason that this home couldn't 16 have been designed with the ordinance in mind and 17 follow the rules.

18 It's still a very big piece of property, and I 19 think the stream is an asset to the property, not a 20 liability. The stream makes for a natural beauty, and 21 I think Stone Canyon is one of the most beautiful 22 streets in our city. I've spent all my life living in 23 Westwood, and I used to jog up Stone Canyon. I know it well, and it is beautiful. And a house that size with 24 25 a flat roof -- and I believe a flat roof is supposed to

1	be 30 feet, not 36 feet according to the ordinance I
2	just I can't see that it couldn't be built in a way
3	that would allow the ordinance to be followed. It
4	doesn't I can't make the findings either. I looked
5	at the findings, and I think the findings are very
б	difficult for me to make to justify this.
7	COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Commissioner Linnick.
8	I think I agree with everything that's been said, and I
9	think we've both the architect for the applicant and
10	the architect for the appellant have said that there
11	are other alternatives for this same property. So I
12	think that also, sort of, adds to my thoughts about the
13	fact that, you know, something else could be done.
14	I agree about the stream. And then, also, you
15	know, talking about the fact that it would that, you
16	know, this is a very large property and something very
17	estate-like I think the discussion from applicant's
18	lawyer was that you know, it needs to be something
19	like everyone else has, a big estate, and it sounds
20	like you can still do that, and it's a large, wonderful
21	property. And I think it could be you know, it
22	could be with more in keeping with the character of
23	the neighborhood. So that's all I have to add, I
24	think.
25	COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Commissioner Donovan.
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I'm prepared to make a motion to -- on this case with the recognition and the cognizance that we have a court reporter here. We have another companion case in litigation right now, and so I have some detailed findings to make, and I apologize for --

COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Okay.

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7 COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: -- the length of it. 8 But I would -- my motion would be to grant the appeal, and the findings that I would make, this, as concerns 9 10 the variance, would be as follows. And I will do the 11 best I can and get it all together along with my notes, 12 and I can make this available to staff in the next couple of days so that you will have something to look 13 at, but --14

In this particular case, you have to make five 15 16 findings in order to grant a variance, and in this 17 particular case, I don't think the applicant can make a single one of these findings as he -- but even if you 18 19 made four of them and you couldn't make the fifth one, 20 you couldn't get a variance. So -- and this will be pursuant to L.A. Municipal Code Section 12.27-D. 21 The first finding you have to make is that it would make a 22 23 strict application of the provisions of the zoning 24 ordinance will not result in practical difficulties or 25 unnecessary hardships inconsistent with the general

purposes and intent of the zoning regulations.

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2 We saw from the report and from the transcript 3 of the hearing before the zoning administrator that the 4 applicant said the variance request is only to allow additional height so the proposed residence can have a 5 consistent roof line for the entire home. Due to the 6 7 varying elevations at the site -- that's on page 13, 8 the second full paragraph -- the case is Committee To Save Hollywoodland v. City of Los Angeles. It is 2008, 9 10 61 Cal. App. 4th, 1168, and Zakessian v. City 11 of Sausalito, 1972, 28 Cal. App. 3rd, 794 -- mandate 12 that hardships must be substantial.

There are no practical difficulties or 13 14 unnecessary hardships in designing and building a house 15 with a variance on this property, and the denial of a 16 variance will not prevent the applicant from designing 17 and building such a house that would be comparable to others in the neighborhood. The evidence to support 18 19 this would be the September 24th, '13 report of 20 David Applebaum, which is attached as Exhibit C to the January 6 -- January 2014 letter from the Marmon law 21 offices and testimony of Jon Perica as stated on 22 23 page 53 of the transcript of the September 25, 2013, 24 hearing. There's also testimony and letters submitted 25 to the ZA by Edgar Khalatian, Victor Marmon,

Michael Piszker, Jon Perica and Janice Lazarof. So I
 would incorporate the evidence referenced in the Marmon
 law offices January 6th of 2014 letters as though fully
 set forth.
 I would also incorporate the testimony

6 evidence submitted at this hearing as though fully set
7 forth.

8 Additionally, there was no competent evidence 9 submitted by applicant to the effect that applicant 10 could not build and design a house comparable to his 11 neighbors' homes without a variance. This application 12 for a variance is essentially for subjective reasons.

13 The second finding that you have to make 14 before you can grant a variance is that -- has to do 15 with special circumstances, and in this case, there are 16 no special circumstances applicable to the subject 17 property such as size, shape, topography, location, or 18 surroundings that do not apply generally to other 19 property in the same zone and vicinity.

20 Committee To Save Hollywoodland required --21 that case requires that special circumstances 22 pertaining to the property must be such that the 23 property is distinct in character from comparable 24 nearby properties. We have received substantial 25 evidence that this is not the only property in the vicinity that has a stream running through it. This is
 not the only property in the vicinity with varying
 elevations. The general topography of this property is
 essentially the same as the surrounding property, which
 Stone Canyon Creek also runs through.

6 There are no special circumstances that 7 prevent applicant from designing and building an estate 8 home without a variance. The same evidence to support 9 this is the same evidence I just cited for Finding 10 No. 1, and it also includes the testimony we heard 11 today.

12 The third finding that you have to make is that regarding the preservation and enjoyment of a 13 14 substantial property right or use generally possessed 15 by other property. In this case, the variance is not 16 necessary for the preservation and enjoyment of a substantial property right or use generally possessed 17 by other property in the same zone and vicinity but 18 19 which, because of the special circumstances and practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships, is 20 21 denied to the property in question.

No special circumstances have been demonstrated for the same reasons in the other findings. No practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships have been demonstrated. The property can be

1 built upon and used similarly as other properties in 2 the vicinity. 3 There are no nearby properties in the vicinity with the same zoning that have received a height 4 variance for the same or similar reasons that are used 5 to justify the present request, and we touched on that 6 7 in the -- that was not really highlighted in the 8 testimony except for on the rebuttal by the applicant's 9 attorney. 10 I will say some of the properties --540 Crestline is three miles away in a different zoned 11 12 255 Mabery is eight miles away in a different area. 480 Bel Air, which was done in 1995, is a 13 zoned area. 14 quarter of a mile away and approved for only 45 feet in height. 457 Bel Air was in 2003, and it's a quarter of 15 16 a mile away as well, an approval for only 55 feet. So 17 those comparable properties offer no support to the applicant. All of the other evidence is the same as 18 19 I've cited to No. 1. The fourth finding has to do with material 20 detrimental -- finding the variance to be materially 21 detrimental to the public welfare, and the granting of 22 this variance would be materially detrimental to the 23 24 public welfare, or injurious to the property or 25 improvements in the same zone or vicinity in which the

property is located.

2	We have evidence before us that the granting
3	of a variance on this property will create an adverse
4	visual effect as respects neighborhood neighboring
5	properties. We've seen that in letters, and it's the
6	testimony that we received today. It will defeat
7	Granting a variance on this property will
8	defeat the purpose of the goals of the Baseline
9	Hillside Ordinance, including which includes the
10	encouraging of building terraced structures. They
11	break up the mass of the structures.
12	The granting of a variance will defeat the
13	purpose of the BHO also in that, under Policy 1-3.3,
14	it's to preserve existing views in hillside areas.
15	There's nothing in there about obstructing. It's
16	supposed to be preserve existing views.
17	Finally, the granting of a variance on this
18	property will and is likely to have a precedential
19	effect. It would essentially raise the general height
20	limit on the neighborhood because anybody could come in
21	and say, "I want a higher structure now." The same
22	evidence that I used before, on the other ones, would
23	be applicable here.
24	The fifth and last one is the granting
25	finding would be the granting of the variance will
	93

adversely affect elements of the General Plan. 1 The 2 Bel Air-Beverly Crest Community Plan purposes include 3 preserving and enhancing the positive characteristics 4 of existing residential neighborhoods; preserving and enhancing the positive characteristics of existing 5 uses, which provide the foundation for community 6 7 identity, identity such as scale, height, bulk, 8 setbacks, and appearances; and the land use policies in the Community Plan there speak to the intensity, that 9 10 the land use should be limited in accordance; the 11 compatibility of the proposed development with existing 12 adjacent development; and the design should minimize adverse visual impact on neighboring single-family 13 14 The proposed -uses.

15 It will adversely affect the existing 16 neighborhood. The proposed height is excessive and not 17 compatible with existing uses and appearances. It does not minimize the adverse visual effect on neighboring 18 19 uses, and most importantly of all, it's likely to set a precedent that will adversely affect the positive 20 characteristics of the neighborhood, and for all of the 21 other reasons that I have found, it applied to the BHO 22 as stated in No. 4. 23

Finally, the granting of this variance will operate to grant a special privilege and permit a use substantially inconsistent with the limitations upon other properties in the same zone and vicinity.

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3 We have no evidence, nor has any been asserted, that another property has received a height 4 variance in the nearby vicinity under the same set of 5 circumstances and facts for the same reason, and 6 7 there's no evidence submitted by the applicant that he 8 could not design and build an estate home comparable to his neighboring -- neighbors' homes without a variance. 9 10 This application for a variance is essentially for 11 aesthetic reasons, also for the same evidence.

The other finding that I would additionally make, the need for a height variance is self-imposed by the applicant. This need is for aesthetic purposes only. A house -- a home can be designed that is aesthetically pleasing without a variance and for the same facts that I cited in the other ones.

Also, I will reference the Stone Canyon matter 18 19 because it was the same -- it's the same applicant. The initial hearing was at the same time. 20 The 21 properties are right next to each other. There's evidence that it's substantially the same, and at that 22 23 point, the representative for the applicant said, yeah, 24 they wanted a higher roof because -- you know, for 25 aesthetic reasons. That was -- and I would incorporate

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1	the testimony from that hearing as well.
2	The final thing that the second to the last
3	thing is that I would cite Orinda Association v. Board
4	of Supervisors, 1986, 182 Cal. App. 3rd, 1145, which
5	holds basically that attractiveness of design lacks
б	legal significance and is irrelevant in these kinds of
7	variance cases.
8	The last thing I would do, I would incorporate
9	the proposed findings by the appellant to the extent
10	that they are consistent with the findings that I've
11	set forth.
12	COMMISSIONER FOSTER: Commissioner Foster.
13	Second.
14	RANDA HANNA: Commissioner Donovan?
15	COMMISSIONER DONOVAN: Aye.
16	RANDA HANNA: Commissioner Foster?
17	COMMISSIONER FOSTER: Aye.
18	RANDA HANNA: Commissioner Halper?
19	COMMISSIONER HALPER: Aye.
20	RANDA HANNA: Commissioner Linnick?
21	COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Aye.
22	RANDA HANNA: And the motion is carried.
23	COMMISSIONER LINNICK: Okay. Our next item is
24	public comment, and I haven't received any comment
25	cards.
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1	DANDA HANNA: No commont corde
	RANDA HANNA: No comment cards.
2	COMMISSIONER LINNICK: So the meeting has
3	adjourned at 6:33.
4	(End of proceedings at 6:33 p.m.)
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1	COURT REPORTERS CERTIFICATE
2	
3	STATE OF CALIFORNIA)) ss.
4	COUNTY OF ORANGE)
5	
6	I, <u>Joanna B. Brown</u> , hereby certify:
7	I am a duly qualified Certified Shorthand
8	Reporter, in the State of California, holder of
9	Certificate Number CSR <u>8570</u> issued by the Court
10	Reporters Board of California and which is in full force
11	and effect.
12	I am not financially interested in this action
13	and am not a relative or employee of any attorney of the
14	parties, or of any of the parties.
15	I am the reporter that stenographically
16	recorded the testimony in the foregoing
17	proceeding and the foregoing transcript is a true
18	record of the testimony given.
19	
20	Dated: February 5, 2014
21	
22	
23	Ganna B. Brown
24	. "
25	
	98

REGULAR MEETING	T	1	1	January 15, 2014
	28:16;45:1;79:21;	3:4	85:10	applicant's (8)
r	84:22;89:5	again (7)	amenities (2)	13:10;20:8;24:3;
[Additionally (2)	26:1;33:3;54:2;	47:2,7	33:18;43:4;80:18;
F 11(1)	90:8;95:12	71:10,11;73:6;84:10	American (2)	87:17;92:8
[ph] (1)	address (13)	against (5)	39:18;57:10	application (6)
81:25	5:20;8:16,17;29:6,	30:13;31:11;	amounts (1)	10:17;21:24;37:6;
[sic] (4)	10;36:17;60:16;	36:16;76:16;79:7	84:2	88:23;90:11;95:10
5:20;7:9;38:15;	67:2;69:11;71:16;	Agency (1)	analysis (13)	applications (2)
84:3	75:21;80:20;83:11	14:14	17:5,12,16,18;	18:10:43:3
Α	addressed (1)	agenda (5)	32:8,19;59:23;60:7,	applied (1)
A	57:18	3:17;4:5,13,14;	25;61:3,3,12,21	94:22
able (3)	addresses (1)	6:10	Angeles (5)	apply (7)
33:22;53:15;76:11	53:14	agendize (1)	3:1,5;29:11;73:9;	26:5;39:21;42:21;
above (4)	adds (1)	71:2	89:9	49:9,10;82:18;90:18
11:8;32:24;34:13;	87:12	ago (6)	announcements (1)	appreciate (2)
84:11	adjacent (9)	9:23;10:5,15;	3:11	34:2;77:8
absolute (1)	9:24;21:15;25:21;	54:25;56:24;76:20	APC (3)	appropriate (2)
54:25	67:22,24;68:2;	agree (6)	8:23;18:20;19:6	13:16;61:6
absolutely (1)	69:18;78:4;94:12	37:22;53:2;85:25;	apologize (1)	approval (7)
68:7	adjoining (1)	86:10;87:8,14	88:5	4:23;9:17;10:14;
absorb (1)	13:7	agreed (2)	App (3)	13:5;28:22;58:5;
33:22	adjourned (1)	39:16;84:15	89:10,11;96:4	92:16
abuse (2)	97:3	agreement (1)	appeal (24)	approvals (1)
31:16;35:17	adjustment (1)	84:17	5:25;6:2,5;9:16,	50:23
abused (1)	18:4	ahead (2)	18,18;10:1;11:22;	approve (4)
30:19	Administrator (13)	18:1;59:20	15:4;18:4,22;19:11;	5:1;13:2,2;41:2
abusive (1)	15:5;39:24;46:23;	Air (10)	25:12;31:6,14;	approved (10)
71:9	57:14,17;67:6,8,21;	32:23;62:22;76:3,	35:18;42:1;45:8;	10:2,14;14:24;
accept (1)	68:8;69:1;70:6;78:2;	4,21;77:20,20;79:17;	66:24;73:11;79:7;	15:11;17:24;33:8;
6:12	89:3	92:13,15	82:12;83:3;88:8	52:17;61:22;84:2; 92:14
access (1)	administrator's (3) 42:2;70:5;83:4	Air-Beverly (1) 94:2	appealed (3) 6:6;12:17;18:20	approving (1)
64:22	admitted (1)	air-conditioning (1)	appear (1)	31:8
accordance (1)	46:6	78:15	52:3	approximately (2)
94:10	adopted (1)	allow (5)	appearance (1)	10:5;22:4
according (1)	34:20	10:9;45:1;47:25;	76:24	architect (20)
87:1	adoption (1)	87:3:89:4	appearances (2)	17:3,4;36:23;46:1;
accounts (1) 54:11	31:15	allowed (4)	94:8,17	49:6;59:5,10,15,24,
accurate (2)	advance (2)	9:21;11:21;62:1;	appeared (1)	25;60:11;62:9,14,15;
65:4;71:25	4:16,17	73:8	76:6	63:8,8;64:25;68:20;
acres (1)	adverse (3)	allowing (1)	appellant (7)	87:9,10
61:15	93:3;94:13,18	18:4	17:4;22:17;29:4;	architecture (1)
across (1)	adversely (3)	allows (2)	36:14;81:1;87:10;	77:1
27:20	94:1,15,20	39:21;61:19	96:9	Area (10)
Act (2)	Advisory (1)	almost (2)	appellant's (3)	3:5;11:15;14:24;
71:1,8	14:14	12:23;57:1	29:4;62:8,9	27:19;28:10,21;
acted (1)	aesthetic (16)	alone (1)	Applebaum (3)	58:17;62:22;92:12,
85:16	24:4,8;27:16,17;	9:11	22:17,23;89:20	13
action (1)	45:6,8,10;46:7,8,10,	along (14)	applicable (3)	areas (2)
31:24	12;63:5;66:4;95:11,	4:22;10:21,22;	26:3;90:16;93:23	25:2;93:14
actual (1)	14,25	11:12;12:3,7;14:14;	applicant (37)	arguing (2)
13:20	aesthetically (3)	37:14,16;54:23;	10:16;22:10;23:1,	49:11;57:22
actually (15)	35:9;51:7;95:16	55:16;72:24;83:21;	6;26:23;33:2,3;	argument (1)
6:1;9:17;11:8;	aesthetics (7)	88:11	35:14;36:1,15,22;	13:9
34:13;43:6;53:16,	62:14;63:5;65:22,	alternative (1)	42:12,14;43:13;	around (5)
21;62:21;63:21,22;	24;66:7,9;78:16	65:1	67:12;68:13,17,23; 70:12:72:7:73:6;	33:11;58:15,15,
64:15;69:15;79:19;	affect (4) 84:24:04:1 15 20	alternatives (2)	70:12;72:7;73:6;	18;62:22
80:16;82:15	84:24;94:1,15,20 affirm (1)	68:21;87:11	77:16;80:9,25;81:1; 87:9;88:17;89:4,16;	art (1) 38:17
add (1)	83:4	although (6) 3:17;4:5;10:16;	87:9;88:17;89:4,16; 90:9,9;91:7;92:18;	artificial (1)
87:23	affirmed (1)	11:5;17:1;69:16	90:9,9,91:7,92:18; 95:7,14,19,23	81:14
addition (1)	42:2	always (4)	applicants (3)	A-shaped (1)
53:22	afternoon (1)	37:1;40:15;66:9;	10:25;24:10;68:9	45:13
additional (5)		57.1, 70.15,00.7,	10.23,27.10,00.7	FJ.1J

REGULAR MEETING	Ĵ		1	January 15, 2014
aspersions (1)	bad (1)	63:15;88:11	34:23	burdened (1)
86:5	69:2	better (2)	boxy (1)	68:25
asserted (1)	band (3)	52:8;60:1	24:17	Business (2)
95:4	61:2,3,21	beyond (1)	Brant (2)	4:16,23
asserting (2)	barely (1)	49:7	36:3,20	
52:23;58:10	38:18	BH (1)	break (3)	С
asset (1)	based (4)	24:16	24:17;35:3;93:11	U
86:19	14:7;23:19;39:23;	BHO (5)	Bridge (2)	Cal (3)
association (2)	57:13	24:15,24;28:4;	75:25;76:2	89:10,11;96:4
40:12;96:3	Baseline (9)	93:13;94:22	briefly (1)	calculating (2)
associations (4)	24:15;32:15;	biased (1)	34:18	34:21;35:5
8:24;51:22,23;	34:17,20;73:9;80:1;	69:16	bring (2)	calendar (2)
78:19	84:18,20;93:8	big (10)	59:5;72:17	4:17,18
attached (1)	basement (1)	23:9,9;53:21;	brings (1)	California (3)
89:20	34:12	54:21;61:24;75:12;	28:3	3:1;29:12;67:5
attend (1)	basic (1)	77:2;82:21;86:18;	Brisbois (1)	call (9)
8:22	39:18	87:19	36:21	4:11;6:20;8:21;
attorney (6)	basically (4)	bigger (1)	brother (1)	9:6,11;38:20;43:20;
24:3;36:24;40:17;	22:18;24:7;75:1;	50:19	41:15	44:23;69:22
63:13;69:14;92:9	96:5	Bisgaard (1)	brothers (1)	called (1)
Attorney's (2)	BAYLISS (9)	36:21	81:25	76:1
34:19;35:23	78:7,12;79:8,10,	bit (4)	Brown (2)	calls (1)
attractive (2)	11,12,12;80:23;	12:8;39:6;45:15,	71:1,8	86:7
41:21;51:12	82:25	20	buffer (6)	came (2)
attractiveness (1)	bear (1)	blatant (2)	10:13;55:10;	70:25;82:2
96:5	29:25	78:1,1	79:21;84:23,24,25	can (66)
August (1)	beautiful (11)	block (5)	build (34)	8:17;11:11,12;
19:9	72:12,13,13,15,19;	24:23;25:3,20;	11:16;22:11,18,	17:17;22:4,17,18;
available (1)	73:2;74:11;76:22,	28:2,5	19;23:14;26:24;	23:8,15,16;24:6;
88:12	25;86:21,24	blocked (2)	34:22;39:13;40:21;	27:13,13;28:16,19;
Avenue (3)	beauty (1)	25:13;44:6	45:23;46:17,20;47:6,	29:4,5;32:10;33:6;
5:21;7:9;67:5	86:20	blocking (1)	11;48:4,6;49:2,3,4;	34:5;36:7,16;37:24;
avoid (1)	begin (1)	24:25	50:4,21,21;53:15,19;	38:10,23;39:14;41:2,
80:2	85:8	blowups (1)	68:21;70:14,16;	3,8;42:5;43:20;
aware (7)	beginning (2)	34:5	72:10,11;73:2;75:2;	44:23;45:2,23;46:2,
10:10;15:20;52:5;	13:9;55:9	board (2)	85:14;90:10;95:8	3;47:6,11;48:4,6,10,
53:13;60:5;61:24;	behalf (2)	82:15;96:3	buildable (1)	10;49:3;50:20;51:3,
82:6	69:16;77:23	bogus (2)	68:15	6;52:16;57:14;
away (7)	behind (6)	70:10,13	builder (1)	64:25;65:3;68:6,11;
37:12;38:12;	12:11;20:8;38:20;	bono (1)	46:1	70:14,15;75:3;
45:22;92:11,12,14,	52:6;57:4;58:18	76:6	building (28)	79:10;80:15;83:22;
16	Bel (11)	bonus (2)	11:7,11;12:1;	87:20;88:11,12,17;
Aye (12)	32:23;62:22;76:3,	6:1,5	13:12;16:22;17:23; 23:2;24:18;32:17;	89:5;90:14;91:25;
5:5,7,11,13;8:5,7, 9,11;96:15,17,19,21	4,21;77:20,20;79:17; 92:13,15;94:2	books (1) 75:4	38:15;39:14;41:13;	95:15 Canyon (53)
9,11,90.13,17,19,21	belief (1)	both (12)	47:5;57:1;61:7,16;	12:23;13:8;14:19;
В	56:20	18:11,12,15;	62:19;63:10;64:13;	15:4;16:13;18:10,
D	believes (1)	20:21;24:24;32:5;	68:18;75:14;82:1;	20;19:9,19;20:2,16;
back (20)	11:23	42:13,15;50:5,5;	83:20,21;89:14,17;	20;19:9;19;20:2;16; 21:7;22:3;24:2;26:2;
8:14;10:6;11:4;	Bell (1)	80:25:87:9	91:7;93:10	32:22;34:3,6,8,14;
12:8;19:6;28:3;30:4;	76:5	bottom (1)	buildings (3)	37:12,15;38:8;40:10,
33:13;43:23;46:4;	Bellagio (17)	38:10	35:4,7;62:24	17;42:8,10,22;43:6,
52:3;57:9;61:14;	8:17;18:10;19:23;	bought (2)	built (14)	25;44:5;51:22;
62:6,7;72:9,17;74:3,	20:18;21:8;22:5;	55:1;57:8	22:5;23:7;27:13,	52:19;53:1,11;
4;80:4	34:8;37:2;40:5;41:3;	Boulevard (1)	14;32:10;41:12;	57:20;67:22;68:3;
backed (1)	42:9,21;44:1;53:1,3;	60:18	49:23;50:9;54:21;	71:19,20;72:24;75:6,
44:17	57:19;76:21	bowl (19)	74:7,7,7;87:2;92:1	10,15,24,24;76:21;
backfill (1)	below (6)	11:1;33:4,16;	bulk (1)	78:17;85:25;86:21,
54:20	38:21;44:4,12,19,	34:13;38:20;43:13,	94:7	23;91:5;95:18
background (1)	22;84:11	19,20;44:10,11,15,	bundled (1)	capable (1)
21:20	benefit (1)	15,15,16,20,23;72:4,	6:7	78:21
backyard (2)	61:11	4,6	burden (1)	card (1)
62:20,21	best (2)	box-like (1)	74:15	3:9
-				

cards (3) 79:7:96:25:97:1 care (1) 55:24 carefully (1) 77:8 carried (3) 5:15;8:12;96:22 cars(2)3:12:37:15 case (52) 6:1,11:7:9:9:1,7, 25;10:2;12:12,23,25; 13:2,7,8;14:14,19; 15:8;17:10;21:7; 23:13,14;24:3,4; 26:23;31:10,20,21; 37:9;40:9,17;52:19, 20,25;61:8;64:16; 68:7;69:22,25;70:1, 3,3;78:14;85:23,25; 86:8;88:1,3,15,17; 89:8;90:15,21;91:15 cases (6) 5:18;14:15;18:9; 31:8;67:18;96:7 cast (1) 86:4 causing (2) 29:16:48:13 CD5(1) 18:25 cell (1) 29:13 Century (1) 29:11**CEOA** (2) 5:19;8:15 certain (2) 40:23;57:2 certainly (3) 44:5;75:3;78:12 cetera (3) 72:10,10;83:12 chairman (1) 76:8 change (6) 7:25;19:13;43:10, 11;56:18;78:3 changed (4) 13:10,17;20:9; 25:13 changes (3) 4:17;26:9;86:11 channel (2) 45:22,22 character (2) 87:22:90:23 characteristics (4) 67:16:94:3,5,21 characterize (1) 55:22 characterized (2)

37:8:46:24 choice (2) 54:23:68:17 chopped (1) 33:13 chose (1) 68:19 circulation (1) 64:15 circumstance (4) 11:25;12:14;27:3; 63:25 circumstances (14) 10:9;13:19;23:21; 26:1,3,7;27:11; 90:15,16,21;91:6,19, 22:95:6 cite (3) 26:7;53:14;96:3 cited (6) 31:24:32:1,2:91:9; 92:19;95:17 citing (1) 67:18 **City (26)** 3:20;19:2,5;20:16, 21;21:17;31:11,16; 34:19,20;35:22; 40:24;41:10,22; 50:16,22;68:10,13; 69:3:70:8.25:76:9: 80:12:86:22:89:9.10 city-created (1) 68:11 clear (10) 31:10;34:16;37:3; 44:9:46:23:51:2; 56:25;58:8;80:10; 81:8 clearly (1) 78:17 client (10) 30:21;42:21;46:6, 16;47:11;48:21,22; 49:17;54:18;56:7 client's (5) 38:16;48:9,23; 53:25;54:2 close (1) 85:7 closest (1) 39:8 Code (2) 61:19:88:21 cognizance (1) 88:2 coming (2) 4:6;76:20 comment (7) 41:4;52:3;73:4; 77:13:96:24.24:97:1 comments (1) 76:15

	7 35 35 00 6 7
commercial-like (1) 76:23	7,25,25;88:6,7; 96:12,12,14,15,16
Commission (28)	17,18,19,20,21,23
3:6;4:16,21,22; 6:12;10:15;12:24;	97:2
13:1;14:25;15:3;	Commissioners (2) 3:13;67:6
29:9;30:18;33:8,17,	Committee (2)
22;34:16;51:10;	89:8;90:20
52:1;54:25;56:3;	$\begin{array}{c} \text{common (1)} \\ (2) \\ 22 \end{array}$
68:1,12;69:13;76:7, 8;77:8;79:20,22	62:23 communities (1)
COMMISSIONER (310)	34:24
3:4,14,15,15,16;	community (7)
4:2,4,8,10,15,20,25, 25;5:2,2,4,5,6,7,8,9,	68:5;76:15,22; 77:1;94:2,6,9
11,12,13,16;6:8,14,	companion (4)
16,18,22,24;7:1,5,7,	5:25;18:8;69:22;
8,11,12,14,15,16,17,	88:3
22,23,24;8:2,2,4,5,6, 7,8,9,10,11,13,18;	comparable (6) 77:16;89:17;
9:2,4,4,10,10,15;	90:10,23;92:17;95
12:18,18,19,19,22;	compatibility (1)
14:2,4,4,11;15:10,	94:11
13,19,24;16:2,5,8,15, 17,20,24,25,25;17:9,	compatible (1) 94:17
19,20,25;18:1,2,2,7,	competent (1)
15,18,25;19:4,8,12,	90:8
16,21,25;20:5,6,11,	complaining (1)
14,20;21:2,6,11,14, 21;22:8,15,22,25;	51:17 complaints (1)
23:4;24:1,12,20;	51:20
25:9,11,18,24;26:13,	completely (5)
17,21;27:2,6,21; 28:19,24;29:3,13,16,	33:24;70:4,20,24; 71:9
17,19,21,23,25;30:3,	compliance (2)
6,8,9,12,16;32:20;	28:8,11
33:20,25;35:11,20, 24;36:7,11,14,19;	compliment (2) 71:22;72:1
38:1,4;42:6,6,17,20;	comply (3)
43:4,12;44:9,14,25;	10:18;32:14;71:1
45:5,23;46:3,14;	complying (1)
47:8,15,17,19,20,22; 48:20;49:1,22,22;	75:3 compromise (1)
50:1,8,11;51:5,14,	68:23
15,20;52:18,18,22;	concern (1)
53:2,6,10;54:1,1,17, 18;55:23;56:2,17;	16:11 concerned (2)
57:5,12;58:6,7,7,10,	52:2;76:20
22;59:2,4,4,7,9,10,	concerns (1)
12,13,16,20,22,24;	88:9
60:2,4,8,9,10,12,15, 20,20,24;61:9,10;	concession (1) 70:15
62:3,4,5,6,16;63:12,	concisely (1)
12,16,24;64:1,6,9,	76:17
17;65:2,8,11,14,19, 25;66:3,6,9,12,15,19,	conclude (1) 35:10
20,23;69:6,9;71:14;	condition (3)
73:14,17,17,21,25;	10:17,18;68:1
74:5,13,14,22;75:18, 21;77:11;79:1,3,4,	conditions (5) 15:13,21;55:8;
11;80:22,24;83:6,9,	84:14;86:12
13;85:4,9,9,22,22;	conflicting (1)
86:1,9,9,10,11;87:7,	3:24

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS January 15, 2014

90:10,23;92:17;95:8

96:12.12.14.15.16.

17,18,19,20,21,23;

confused (1) 50:4 consideration (2) 55:18:73:3 considering (1) 77:8 consistent (9) 24:6,14:28:8:45:2, 19;52:6;65:22;89:6; 96:10 consistently (1) 70:22 constituents (1) 51:24 constitutes (1) 63:9 constrain (1) 83:2 constrained (2) 48:11;63:20 constraint (2) 81:15:82:7 constraints (3) 11:20;47:4;53:21 construct (1) 11:17 construction (3) 13:13:14:20:15:20 consultant (1) 36:24 contextually (2) 63:10:66:1 contiguous (1) 13:25 continue (2) 6:23:7:8 continued (3) 3:18;5:22;7:3 contradicted (1) 22:23 contrast (1) 35:1 convey (2) 3:25;75:1 Copa (3) 38:15;48:14;52:7 copy (1) 35:22 corner (2) 34:7,8 correctly (1) 36:3 corridor (1) 4:7 Council (16) 16:10;19:2,5,18; 20:4,16,21;21:17; 31:16;34:19,20; 55:25;70:8,25;71:7; 85:11 councilman (3) 76:9:78:5.10 councilman's (1)

85:11 Councilmember (6) 31:23;70:24;78:8; 79:13:80:7:86:2 Counsel (3) 48:21:70:18:79:2 Counselor (1) 51:14 count (1) 30:12 de (3) couple (5) 8:19;17:1;54:6; 81:4;88:13 course (5) 28:15:48:2.6; 58:19;66:12 Court (9) 31:14,14;40:18; 62:20;64:11,12,19; 70:11;88:2 courts (2) 47:3;70:21 cover (1) 53:15 coverage (2) 61:18,20 covered (3) 27:7;28:24;37:7 covering (1) 56:15 create (7) 41:20:43:18: 72:12,12,13,19;93:3 created (2) 21:7;52:19 creation (1) 43:14 creek (16) 10:10,12;11:4,10, 18:12:10.12:14:9; 15:14:16:12.12: 26:8:32:3:79:25; 80:8;91:5 Crest (1) 94:2 Crestline (1) 92:11 criteria (1) 77:3 crux (1) 24:1 cubic (2) 84:3.3 current (5) 15:15,15;34:21; 78:9,10 currently (2) 6:1;21:15 cut (3) 10:19:11:13:84:3 D

Dan (7) 71:15:75:19.19.20. 23,23;77:13 David (2) 22:17;89:20 day (3) 18:11;37:15;56:23 days (1) 88:13 38:15;48:14;52:7 deal (1)83:1 dealt (1) 57:17 debate (1) 24:24 December (2) 4:24;5:1 decide (1) 21:7 decision (8) 20:15;21:10;27:5; 30:20;31:13;68:2; 70:8:71:3 decision-making (1) 52:2 decisions (1) 19:18 dedicated (1) 83:5 deeper (1) 56:21 defeat (3) 93:6,8,12 define (1) 44:16 defined (1) 48:4 defines (1) 17:23 definitely (1) 79:14 degree (1) 58:11 deja (1) 12:23 deliberations (1) 85:8 demonstrated (2) 91:23,25 denial (6) 18:23:19:13; 21:10;22:25;70:5; 89:15 denied (13) 9:25;10:1;18:19, 21,22;27:12;42:1; 67:25;70:4,6;71:5, 10:91:21 dense (3) 43:23:44:23:51:11 density (2)

6:1,5 denv (6) 19:14:23:17; 71:11;73:11;82:12; 83:3 **Department (9)** 3:20;6:22;32:9,16, 17:50:16:61:6.23; 86:3 departmental (1) 3:19 deputy (2) 71:4.4 described (3) 10:25;11:1;72:3 deserves (1) 81:11 design (18) 23:8,17;35:3;55:2; 57:3;62:10;63:17; 64:1,7,16:65:1,5,11, 15;90:10;94:12; 95:8;96:5 designed (7) 11:12;55:13,16; 61:25;72:19;86:16; 95:15 designing (4) 61:10;89:14,16; 91:7 designs (1) 62:8 desire (1) 39:20 detail (3) 39:12;57:16,18 detailed (3) 57:14;83:4;88:4 determination (10) 19:5.13:20:17; 39:24;42:2;48:3; 49:11,15,16;81:18 determine (2) 32:9,17 determined (1) 32:18 detriment (1) 72:17 detrimental (4) 27:25;92:21,22,23 develop (1) 76:11 developed (2) 21:16;76:5 developer (1) 13:3 developers (2) 34:22;69:2 developing (2) 23:23:81:22 development (4) 28:9:35:9:94:11, 12

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS January 15, 2014

Diefenderfer (1) 4:12 difference (8) 20:6;30:7;32:1; 50:20:54:6.9:70:1.2 differences (2) 13:1;31:21 different (18) 6:4;13:5;14:21; 20:22,23:21:3; 23:17;31:20;35:13; 37:4;40:7;41:7;42:9, 24:50:16:81:24: 92:11,12 differential (8) 54:10,13,16;58:16, 20;72:22,23;82:9 differentials (2) 72:25:73:2 differentiate (1) 85:24 differently (2) 13:21;86:8 difficult (6) 33:21;39:13; 55:13;81:16;82:11; 87:6 difficulties (8) 21:25;23:6,11; 27:11:88:24:89:13; 91:20,24 difficulty (2) 23:5;58:21 diligence (1) 68:14 DIR-2012-1112-DB (1) 5:19 directly (1) 71:20 disagree (1) 86:2 disappointed (1) 30:22 discern (1) 14:18 disclosure (1) 9:5 disclosures (1) 8:20 discourage (1) 34:25 discretion (4) 30:19:31:17; 35:18;49:13 discretionary (6) 48:3;49:11,15; 58:5;70:18,20 discuss (1) 66:7 discussed (1) 79:18 discussion (4) 8:25;9:7;83:24;

87:17 dispute (1) **4**0:25 distance (1) 67:14 distinct (1) 90:23 distinguished (2) 85:17;86:2 distinguishes (1) 70:3 distress (1) 48:13 district (1) 85:11 document (2) 32:8;77:24 documents (3) 33:22;56:13,20 Doheny (1) 76:4 done (13) 37:6;41:24;42:12, 15;46:10;50:24; 52:13,14;55:4; 57:14;83:25;87:13; 92:13 Donovan (109) 3:15;5:2,2,6,7;8:2, 2,6,7,18;18:2,2,7,15, 18,25;19:4,8,12,16, 21.25:20:5.11.14.20: 21:2,6,11,14,21; 22:8.15.22.25:23:4: 24:1,12,20;25:9,11, 18,24;26:13,17,21; 27:2,6,21:28:19,24; 32:20:42:6.6.17.20: 43:4,12;44:9,14,25; 45:5,23;46:3,14; 47:8,20,22;48:20; 49:1:52:18,18,22; 53:2,10;54:1,1;58:7, 7,10,22;59:2;62:4; 63:12,12,16,24;64:1, 6,9,17;65:2,8,11,14, 19,25;66:3,6,9,12; 85:22,22;86:11; 87:25,25;88:7;96:14, 15 door (2) 71:20:72:23 double (1) 33:12 doubt (3) 43:16,17;48:21 down (12) 11:3;16:13;35:1,8; 39:4;53:10;54:8; 75:11,15;79:18,22; 81:6 drew (1) 16:21

Min-U-Script®

(4) Councilmember - drew

REGULAR MEETING	r			January 15, 2014
drive (1)	elected (1)	74:17;87:17	expect (1)	feeling (1)
75:15	85:12		33:3	9:11
		estate-size (1) 49:19		9.11 feels (1)
drives (1)	elements (1)		experts (1)	
75:11	94:1 elevation (3)	estate-type (2)	42:5	80:15
driveway (1)		46:25;47:1	explained (1)	feet (45)
72:12	34:6;54:6;81:7	et (3)	46:22	9:20,20;11:6,9;
driving (2)	elevations (7)	72:10,10;83:12	Expo(1)	25:17,17;33:12;34:6,
37:14;52:9	26:15,18;31:22;	Etiwanda (1)	4:7	7;37:12;38:11,25,25,
dropped (1) 14:22	54:3;58:12;89:7; 91:3	67:4	export (1) 84:4	25;39:9,10,11;45:17;
	else (5)	even (10) 4:12;6:10;25:3;		48:15,16;54:7,11,13, 16;56:25;61:16,17;
drove (1) 58:15	12:10;53:8;84:12;	44:3;72:6,22;74:24,	exposed (1) 34:12	72:8,9;74:3;75:7,10,
Due (2)	87:13,19	25;78:3;88:18	extent (2)	17;81:9,13,14,15;
68:14;89:6	empathy (1)	evening (5)	43:13;96:9	83:14;84:4,7,7;87:1,
during (3)	76:10	3:8;69:12;71:18;	extra (3)	1;92:14,16
15:3;61:4,23	empty (1)	72:2;79:14	29:23;30:7,9	felt (11)
Dveirin (62)	40:22	everybody (6)	extremely (3)	9:21;10:7,19;
36:3,3,4,18,20,20;	encourage (3)	37:19,20;40:21;	30:22;43:23;69:21	11:19;12:13;13:16,
38:3,6;42:14,19,23;	24:17;35:2,7	56:11;72:7;73:10	50.22,45.25,09.21	18;23:15;25:19,22;
43:8,15;44:12,16;	encouraging (1)	everyone (1)	F	80:16
45:4,7,25;46:9,22;	93:10	87:19	L	fence (1)
47:13,16,18,21,23;	end (3)	evidence (22)	facing (1)	18:4
48:25;49:6,25;50:7,	41:2;76:14;97:4	22:23;25:18;	64:12	fences (1)
10,14;51:6,19;52:4,	enforce (1)	35:14;46:15,19;	fact (16)	12:11
21,24;53:5,7,12;	51:24	58:23;59:1;67:10;	22:16;30:18;	Ferris (1)
54:4;55:21;56:1,12,	enhancing (2)	89:18;90:2,6,8,25;	31:17;32:14,18;	77:14
18;57:7,13;58:9,13,	94:3,5	91:8,9;92:18;93:2,	35:17;37:13;44:2;	few (3)
25;59:3,25;60:3,5,	enjoyment (3)	22;95:3,7,11,22	51:9,15;53:5;58:13;	31:6;54:16;76:19
11,14;66:17,22;81:2,	27:9;91:13,16	ex- (1)	62:18;78:23;87:13,	Fifteen (1)
3;84:5,10,12	entire (5)	34:18	15	61:18
- 7 - 7 - 7	24:7;45:3;79:22;	exact (2)	factors (1)	fifth (3)
E	82:9;89:6	68:15;74:9	47:10	28:25;88:19;93:24
	entitled (5)	exactly (4)	facts (13)	filed (6)
easement (1)	39:17,22;48:9,21;	40:2;57:20,24;	20:2,7,11,13,22,	11:22;18:11,11;
10:12	69:4	74:8	23;21:4;31:20;32:3,	19:1;31:10;69:19
easier (1)	entrance (2)	example (2)	3;85:23;95:6,17	fill (2)
55:20	32:23;76:22	37:25;68:6	fairly (3)	3:8;84:4
East (5)	envelope (3)	examples (2)	54:8,8;85:19	filled (1)
29:11;38:22;	35:7;83:20,21	67:12;69:2	fairness (1)	36:5
43:24;44:18;54:10	Environmental (3)	except (3)	13:24	final (3)
easterly (1)	5:19;8:15;16:10	34:10;38:24;92:8	familiar (3)	31:10,13;96:2
32:2	equipment (2)	excerpt (1)	9:23;18:14;60:6	finally (6)
easy (6)	63:2,2	34:19	family (2)	41:2;52:17;70:15;
55:22,23;56:6,7,8;	equivalent (1)	excessive (1)	67:23;76:5	84:22;93:17;94:24
70:23	75:13	94:16	fan (1)	find (6)
Edgar (1)	erred (1)	Excuse (4)	80:5	20:22;23:21;
89:25	30:19	8:18;33:20;38:1;	fancy (1)	24:13;27:24;47:10;
effect (10)	error (1)	71:7	82:1	77:15 finding (16)
20:16;28:20;31:9;	31:16	exercise (1) 49:12	far (7)	0 . /
46:16,19;58:24;	errors (1) 35:17	exhaust (1)	15:1;20:3;23:14;	23:5;27:22;28:1; 47:10;67:19,21;68:8,
90:9;93:4,19;94:18 effectively (1)	especially (1)	63:2	37:25;38:7;48:24; 61:7	10;88:22;90:13;
31:21	77:25	exhibit (5)	favor (2)	91:9,12;92:20,21;
effort (1)	essentially (9)	33:18;34:4;38:1,2;	49:13;79:7	93:25;95:12
56:15	19:5;33:15;39:3;	89:20	feature (1)	findings (32)
eight (1)	40:14;51:11;90:12;	existing (12)	35:3	20:22;21:1,3,22;
92:12	91:4;93:19;95:10	25:1;28:4;32:21,	features (1)	25:25;28:17,18;
Eighteen (1)	estate (9)	22;34:25;93:14,16;	67:25	30:18;35:15,16;67:7,
39:10	47:11;62:18,19;	94:4,5,11,15,17	February (9)	9,16;70:3,9,10,13,17,
Eighty-two (2)	63:9;76:3,4;87:19;	exists (1)	7:4,10,12,13,19,	21;80:15;85:18;
39:9;45:16	91:7;95:8	68:5	19,20,21;8:1	86:6;87:4,5,5;88:5,9,
either (3)	estate-like (5)	exit (1)	Federation (3)	16,18;91:24;96:9,10
56:5,8;87:4	49:2;50:3;62:11;	32:23	51:22;77:24;78:18	fine (1)
			, , ,	

94:6

86:3

71:3

28:21

83:13 finish (3) 6:6:41:3:51:21 finished (1) 34:8 firm(2)36:21.24 **First (17)** 9:22;11:23;21:23; 30:17:31:23:33:5: 38:6;42:11;48:15, 20:56:24:65:21; 71:22:77:22:81:5: 83:14;88:22 Fisk (8) 69:10;71:15; 75:19,19,20,23,23; 77:13 five (12) 10:15;21:22;29:7; 36:1,19:67:6:70:17; 77:3;81:9,15;83:14; 88:15 five-story (1) 75:13 flat (11) 33:15;39:5;45:13, 14,18;72:6;77:22; 84:6,6;86:25,25 floor (3) 34:9:48:15:78:14 flu (1) 30:25 folks (1) 3:11 follow (2) full (3) 76:14;86:17 followed (1) fully (3) 87:3 follows (2) 35:5;88:10 foot (1) 72:16 footage (5) 22:4,12;32:10; 61:25;62:1 foothill (1) 33:5 footprint (2) 61:16;68:18 forced (1) 68:13 forth (4) 72:2;90:4,7;96:11 forward (2) 73:13;81:2 Foster (69) 3:16;4:8,25,25; 5:4,5,9;6:14,16,24; 7:5,8,12,14,15,22,24; 8:4,5;9:4,4;15:10,13, 19,24;16:2,5,8,15,17, 20,24;17:20,25;

29:13,16,19,23:30:6, 26:5,6:27:10:61:3: 9;38:1,4;47:15,17, 67:11:90:18:91:14. 19:53:6:54:17,18: 17 gentleman (1) 55:23;56:2,17;57:5, 12;58:6;59:7,10,13, 82:15 20,24;60:9;66:19; gets (7) 79:3;83:9;86:9,9; 6:6;24:1;46:17; 48:22;52:8,14;68:23 96:12,12,16,17 found (4) given (2) 68:3:71:2:73:1; 10:7:14:8 gives (1) 94:22 foundation (1) 34:22 glad (1) four (10) 74:18 3:18;41:11,12; goals (3) 49:23;50:9;51:12; 24:15,16;93:8 68:21;71:22;76:24; goes (9) 36:14,15;39:4; 88:19 four- (1) 41:9;47:9;72:4; 75:13 73:23;81:6;83:21 four-lot (1) golf (1) 84:14 58:19 fourth (1) Good (10) 92:20 3:4:4:19:6:8: frankly (1) 40:18;63:1;66:21; 69:12;71:18;77:4; French-chateau (1) 80:11 62:23 grade (10) Friday (1) 31:21;32:1;33:14; 38:21:44:19.22; front (1) 49:8:55:2:83:21.23 75:15 graded (3) 33:14;42:12:57:8 frontage (5) 10:21,23;26:9,22; gradient (1) 72:19 48:11 grading (11) 3:10:34:11:89:8 42:12,15;43:6,11, 16:44:3:54:18.20: 82:16;90:3,6 55:4:80:2:83:25 function (1) gradually (2) 64:15 33:6,16 functional (3) grant (11) 62:22,24;63:1 20:1,17,25;28:16; fundamental (1) 35:18;67:19;68:4; 57:10 88:8,16;90:14;94:25 further (6) granted (9) 30:2,4;38:12; 9:19;11:21,24; 66:13;77:13;80:4 12:16;19:18;21:16; future (1) 63:7;69:3;81:20 granting (16) 13:15:27:23; G 28:19:35:19:49:13: 68:6;70:7;84:1; Gabaee (1) 92:22;93:2,7,12,17, 24,25;94:24 36:22 gathered (1) grants (1) 69:2 56:19 Great (8) geared (2) 13:19:17:13 4:15;8:13;16:11; general (6) 59:6:60:12:62:20, 22:1;77:23;88:25; 21:86:1 91:3:93:19:94:1 greatest (1) generally (8) 58:11

greatly (1) 85:13 Groman (1) 81:25 group (1) 82:13 groups (1) 16:10 guarantee (2) 70:10;71:11 guess (8) 20:5,14:23:15; 24:23;28:17;41:6; 44:24:66:13 guests (1) 29:9 guidelines (1) 73:10 guy (1) 79:13 Η hack (1) 31:17 Hackbarth (13) 67:1,1;69:10; 71:14,18,19;73:16, 19,23;74:2,6,21,24 half (1)75:16 Halper (22) 3:14;5:9,10,11; 8:8,9:12:19,19,22; 14:2;20:6;33:20,25; 51:14,15,20;85:9,9; 86:1,10;96:18,19 hand (3)56:7:78:15.16 HANNA (21) 4:19:5:4.6.8.10.12. 14;7:3,13,20;8:4,6,8, 10,12;96:14,16,18, 20,22;97:1 happened (8) 6:3,19,20;10:3; 20:4;29:18;69:21; 70:25 happens (2) 36:11,12 happy (2) 80:20:83:1 hard (3) 14:17;55:7;70:22 hard- (1) 68:10 hardly (1) 82:4 hardscape (1) 72:13 hardship (10) 11:25;13:12,14, 23;14:18;23:5;

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS January 15, 2014

27:12:68:11:81:7; 83:16 hardships (8) 21:25;23:10,22; 88:25:89:12,14; 91:20.25 hear (6) 59:8,13:66:18,24; 74:11,18 heard (9) 12:24;14:7;18:21; 26:7:31:12:42:24; 62:8;85:23;91:10 hearing (28) 10:4,6;13:18,18; 14:12,13,15;15:7,8; 18:16;19:9,22;22:9; 24:21;30:23;32:12, 13;33:2,19;43:5; 52:12;71:5;85:8; 89:3,24;90:6;95:20; 96:1 hearings (2) 42:11;46:16 heart (1) 47:10 height (39) 9:17,25;11:5; 13:21;14:21;17:16; 18:13:21:16:23:8; 24:13,22:25:4,5: 27:16:28:2.7.14.16: 33:13:34:11,22:35:5, 7;41:7;45:2;64:2,10; 65:16:68:4:81:9: 83:22;89:5;92:4,15; 93:19:94:7.16:95:4. 13 height-variance (1) 45:1 held (5) 10:4,6:13:18:15:7, 7 help (4) 41:1;52:15;58:1; 70:19 helpful (1) 40:1 Hi (1) 3:21 higher (5) 39:6;45:15,21; 93:21:95:24 highlighted (1) 92:7 hill (6) 33:13;43:23;44:2, 17,22;52:6 hills (1) 58:18 hillside (23) 11:14;15:2;24:15; 25:2;28:10;32:15;

REGULAR MEETING	r
34:17,20;35:8;51:22, 25;55:17;77:24; 78:18:24:80:11:14:	95:15 Houseke
78:18,24;80:1,1,4;	3:7
82:13;83:17;84:20;	houses (
93:9,14	41:12;
hillsides (3)	huge (4)
26:18;34:23;80:3	37:6;3
himself (1)	20
55:9	hypothe
historical (1) 69:4 history (1)	65:18
69:24 hodgepodge (1)	idea (4)
76:15	37:13
hold (1)	80:11
19:22	identifie
holds (1)	34:24
96:5	identifyi
Hollywood (1)	68:10
60:19	identity
Hollywoodland (2)	94:7,7
89:9;90:20	ill (1)
Holmby (1)	52:8
82:22	imagine
home (40)	15:23;
9:19,20;11:8,12;	10;55:
23:23;24:7;39:7;	immedia
41:6;44:5;45:3,16,	54:5,1
24;46:17,21;47:1,6,	59:14
11;49:2;50:3,12;	immedia
55:6;62:11;63:17;	6:10,1
64:2,7;65:6,12,15;	impact (
72:10;74:3,6,10;	48:12;
75:25;80:3;86:13,	impacti
15;89:6;91:8;95:8,	48:17
15	impacts
homeowner (3)	44:7
73:8;78:19;85:14	impedec
homeowners (2)	48:23
8:24;40:12	implicat
homes (17)	85:15
12:7;41:13;44:6;	importa
45:8;46:12,25;49:3,	28:11;
19,24;50:9,19;51:12;	57:9
57:3;72:24;73:3;	importa
90:11;95:9	94:19
homework (1)	imposed
31:3	53:18;
hope (2)	impositi
30:14;52:8	39:16
Hopefully (2)	impossil
30:1;37:19	65:5
house (38)	impress
22:4,11,18;23:2,7,	58:23
8;27:13,19;32:24,24;	improve
34:9,9,11,12,13,15;	92:25
38:17;55:13,16;	inability
63:10;67:11;68:22,	67:20
23;70:14,16;72:15;	Inaudib
81:14;82:10,22;	63:24
83:23;84:5,9;86:12,	incentiv
24;89:14,17;90:10;	34:22

include (1) (1) lousekeeping 94:2 included (1) 29:1 ouses (3) 41:12;67:13;82:21 includes (2) 91:10:93:9 uge (4) including (2) 37:6;38:20;74:15, 58:17:93:9 ypothetical (1) incompatible (1) 65:18 76:25 inconsistent (3) Ι 22:1;88:25:95:1 incorporate (4) 90:2.5:95:25:96:8 37:13;43:19;48:7; incorrect (1) 78:5 indicate (2) dentified (1) 25:22;51:23 dentifying (1) indicated (2) 31:19;68:14 lentity (2) indication (1) 94:7,7 77:3 influence (1) 78:2 information (11) nagine (5) 15:23;16:1;24:9, 7:17;10:7;14:5,8, 25;15:5;16:21;17:2; 10:55:7 nmediate (4) 21:20;40:6,7 54:5,15;58:17; initial (5) 19:13:21:10; nmediately (2) 31:24;42:25;95:20 iniurious (1) 6:10,11 mpact (2) 92:24 48:12;94:13 installed (1) 33:11 mpacting (1) instance (1) mpacts (1) 78:1 instances (2) 5:24:50:23 npeded (1) instead (1) mplication (1) 84:8 integrity (1) nportant (4) 46:11 28:11;39:2;44:8; intensity (1) 94:9 nportantly (1) intensive (1) 41:16 intent (4) nposed (3) 4:13;22:1;28:8; 53:18;83:1;84:13 nposition (2) 89:1 39:16:84:16 intently (1) mpossible (1) 71:23 interest (1) npression (1) 4:6 interrupt (1) nprovements (1) 34:2 into (10) nability (1) 10:19;11:13; 39:12;55:18;56:15; naudible (1) 73:3;76:20,22;80:3,4 invade (1) centive (1) 57:21 invaded (1)

37:8 involved (2) 30:24;76:13 ironwork (1) 37:17 irregular-shaped (1) 79:16 irrelevant (1) 96:6 issuance (1) 77:7 issue (6) 17:11;37:6,13; 40:4;62:17;70:14 issues (2) 30:24;32:18 issuing (1) 30:20 item (9) 4:22;5:14,17,17; 8:14;9:16;61:5,22; 96:23 items (3) 3:7,17;4:6 J Janice (1) 90:1 January (8) 3:1.6:10:5:18:16: 33:19:89:21.21:90:3 **JIM (69)** 3:22;4:3,11;5:23; 6:9,15,17,21,25; 9:14,16;12:21;13:6; 14:3,10,12;15:12,17, 23,25;16:4,7,14,16, 19.23;17:7.12.22; 18:6.14.17.24:19:3. 7,11,15,20,24;20:3, 10.13.19.24:21:5.9. 13,19;22:7,14,21,24; 23:3,12,13;24:9,19; 25:7,10,14,21;26:12, 16,20,25;27:4,17; 28:13,22 job (3) 31:17;41:3;57:14 jog (1) 86:23 John (4) 66:25;69:10,12,13 joint (1) 14:13 Jon (6) 66:24;67:4,4;69:8; 89:22;90:1 jumped (1) 28:10 June (1) 18:22 jurisdiction (1)

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS January 15, 2014

82:14 iustification (1) 68:7 iustify (4) 67:15:68:6:87:6; 92:6 Κ keep (2) 57:9;83:22 keeping (1) 87:22 kept (1) 10:17 Khalatian (1) 89:25 kind (3) 28:22;50:4;57:23 kinds (2) 49:3:96:6 knew (3) 55:3,9;71:5 Knowing (2) 80:12;86:13 knowledge (1) 61:2 known (1) 55:12 knows (1) 55:14 Koretz (2) 31:23:70:24 Koretz' (1) 79:13 L LA (2) 14:24:88:21 lack (1) 17:4lacks (1) 96:5 land (10) 28:21;33:5,6; 36:24;40:20;76:13; 77:4;79:13;94:8,10 landscape (1) 10:13 landscaping (3) 11:4;41:24;72:13 large (8) 27:13;34:22; 43:23;46:25,25; 62:21;87:16,20 larger (1) 41:13 last (19) 4:23,24;6:3,10; 12:6,6;15:8;29:17; 40:21;42:10;43:5; 68:1;71:1;76:6;82:1,

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS January 15, 2014

REGULAR MEETING	r
3;93:24;96:2,8	limitations
late (1)	68:15;80
71:3	limited (2)
later (2)	47:4;94:1
17:2;76:4	limits (2)
law (12)	23:8;44:1
35:17;36:20;	line (10)
39:19,20,20;47:24;	24:6;45:3
57:11;83:16,16,17;	48:16;53
89:21;90:3	22;70:24
lawyer (2)	lines (1)
46:1;87:18	17:15
Lazarof (5)	LINNICK
40:16,16;52:7;	3:4,15;4:
80:5;90:1	20;5:12,1
least (8)	18,22;7:1
10:20;13:9;25:19,	23;8:10,1
22;37:20;38:11; 53:18;68:21	10,10,15;
leave (3)	17:9,19;1
4:3;11:14;31:18	17,21,25;
led (1)	16;35:11,
71:10	11,14,19;
left (2)	50:1,8,11
39:7;78:20	4,9,12,16
legal (1)	8,10,12,1
96:6	61:9,10;6
legally (1)	66:15,20,
50:17	71:14;73
length (2)	21,25;74:
79:22;88:7	75:18,21;
less (3)	4,11;80:2
41:16;51:4,11	83:6,13;8
letter (11)	88:6;96:2
6:25;17:3;30:20;	97:2
31:5;68:20;71:6,21;	list (1)
76:17;77:9;83:25; 89:21	81:19 listed (1) 78:19
letters (6) 40:11;51:18; 52:12;89:24;90:3;	listen (1) 41:22
93:5	listened (1)
level (8)	72:3
11:15,15;43:7;	listening (2
44:4,13;65:12,13;	6:16;71:2
84:11	lists (1)
Lewis (1)	67:12
36:21	litigation (2
liability (1)	69:17;88
86:20	little (6)
lieu (2)	11:3;38:1
9:20;33:23	45:15,20
life (1)	live (4)
86:22	41:14,15
light (1)	77:19
40:10	living (1)
lightly (1)	86:22
56:5	LO (24)
likely (2)	36:5;60:1
93:18;94:19	61:2,12;6
limit (4)	63:15,19,
25:6;64:10;84:6;	11,20;65
93:20	24;66:1,5
	, ,-

mitations (3)	locate (1)	
68:15;80:12;95:1	68:18	
mited (2) 47:4;94:10	located (2) 44:13;93:1	
mits (2)	locating (1)	
23:8;44:1	63:2	
ne (10)	location (7)	
24:6;45:3,19,24;	26:4;34:14;64:14,	
48:16;53:19;65:20,	18,24;68:19;90:17	
22;70:24;89:6	logically (1)	
nes (1)	72:18	
17:15	long (4)	
INNICK (112)	10:21;26:9,22;	
3:4,15;4:2,4,10,15,	69:5	
20;5:12,13,16;6:8,	longer (2)	
18,22;7:1,7,11,16,17,	37:9;56:21	
23;8:10,11,13;9:2,	look (11)	
10,10,15;12:18,18;	10:24;37:23;	
14:4,4,11;16:25,25;	38:13;40:8;43:15;	
17:9,19;18:1;29:3,	47:24;63:22;71:25; 79:15;82:3;88:13	
17,21,25;30:3,8,12, 16;35:11,20,24;36:7,	looked (5)	
11,14,19;49:22,22;	24:16,24;58:15;	
50:1,8,11;51:5;59:4,	72:1;87:4	
4,9,12,16,22;60:2,4,	looking (8)	
8,10,12,15,20,20,24;	18:18;23:13,19;	
61:9,10;62:3,5,6,16;	37:3;48:15;56:4,13,	
66:15,20,23;69:6,9;	24	
71:14;73:14,17,17,	looks (1)	
21,25;74:5,13,14,22;	65:25	
75:18,21;77:11;79:1,	Los (5)	
4,11;80:22,24;81:3;	3:1,5;29:11;73:9;	
83:6,13;85:4;87:7,7;	89:9	
88:6;96:20,21,23;	lose (1)	
97:2	81:16	
st (1)	lost (1)	
81:19 sted (1)	51:9 lot (24)	
78:19	3:10;10:3,7;12:8;	
sten (1)	16:9;24:21;35:6;	
41:22	40:21;41:7,9;56:2,4,	
stened (1)	9,14;57:2;61:17,19;	
72:3	67:17;79:14,16,17;	
stening (2)	82:1,3;85:2	
6:16;71:23	lots (5)	
sts (1)	41:11,13,14;	
67:12	50:18;61:15	
tigation (2)	loud (1)	
69:17;88:4	80:10	
ttle (6)	lovely (1)	
11:3;38:14;39:6;	74:16	
45:15,20;82:22 ve (4)	lowered (2) 43:7,18	
41:14,15;75:23;	43.7,18 lowest (2)	
77:19	81:10,15	
ving (1)	luck (1)	.
86:22	40:18	
O (24)		.
36:5;60:18,18,23;	Μ	
61:2,12;62:14,17;		
63:15,19,25;64:4,8,	Mabery (1)	
11,20;65:7,9,13,17,	92:12	
24;66:1,5,7,11	Madam (2)	

8:19:69:12 mailbox (1) 75:25 main (2) 70:14:79:15 maintain (2) 10:22;79:19 maintained (1) 10:11 major (1) 32:23 majority (1) 78:24 makes (7) 30:7;53:20,22; 81:13,16;82:10; 86:20 managed (1) 73:2 manager (1) 36:23 mandate (3) 31:11;69:19;89:11 mandated (2) 79:19.21 mandatory (2) 49:15;70:21 manner (2) 85:16,19 **Mansionization (6)** 73:9,12:82:17,19, 21:84:19 many (6) 33:7;34:23;54:22, 25;69:1;73:1 map (15) 5:25;10:14;14:23, 23;15:11;17:14,15; 32:8,19;33:8;41:11; 43:3;80:11:84:1.15 maps (1) 17:13 marginally (1) 11:15 Marmon (24) 29:5,8,10,15;30:1, 4,11,14,17;33:24; 34:1;35:12,22,25; 36:9,13;69:18;83:7, 10,10,14;89:21,25; 90:2 Marmon's (1) 38:16 marquee (1) 76:22 mass (1) 93:11 massive (3) 31:16;33:11;35:3 material (2) 56:10;92:20 materially (3)

27:25;92:21,23

matter (16) 5:21:6:23:19:1: 22:16:24:2:30:23; 31:12;38:24;41:10; 49:21;50:21;51:3,6; 54:16;78:23;95:18 maximally (2) 41:20:49:17 maximize (4) 48:7:49:18:53:24; 70:19 maximum (5) 39:20;57:11; 61:13,24;62:1 may (8) 4:5;8:23;11:13; 30:20;36:5;43:17; 51:7;85:10 Maybe (2) 30:6;40:14 mean (11) 10:1;11:2;20:3; 26:17;34:1;50:4; 55:12;57:19;62:25; 65:3,4 meaning (1) 25:7 measure (2) 81:9;82:8 measured (4) 11:9;13:21;14:21; 17:17 measurement (1) 81:15 measuring (5) 15:1;67:14;81:12; 83:14,19 mechanical (1) 63:2 meet (3) 39:21;49:12;57:15 Meeting (7) 3:6,24;4:24;7:18; 8:23;29:17;97:2 member (1) 69:20 Members (3) 29:8;33:21;69:13 mentioned (1) 32:20 mentioning (1) 49:23 mere (1) 54:6 merits (1) 9:1 met (4) 39:25;41:25;77:3, 4 method (2) 34:21;35:5

Michael (1)

90:1

63:11;94:4

might (5)	30:1;80
9:22;25:23;29:16;	Mrs (1)
51:4;77:14	80:5
mile (2)	much (10
92:14,16	12:9;13
miles (2)	32:10;4
92:11,12	69:8;77
mind (3)	85:1
72:4;78:3;86:16	Mulholla
mine (1)	82:2
46:13 minimal (1)	Municipa 88:21
44:3	Murdock
minimize (2)	66:25;6
94:12,18	must (4)
minute (3)	69:16;7
29:24;30:10;71:1	89:12;9
minutes (12)	myself (1
4:23;5:1;29:7;	13:6
36:1,19;67:3;71:17;	
75:22;76:20;81:1,2;	
83:7	
misnomer (1) 43:20	name (13 29:6,10
45:20 mistake (1)	29:0,10 60:16;6
77:2	13;71:1
mistaken (1)	77:18;8
84:19	narrow (
misuse (1)	47:9
69:23	natural (
modification (1)	86:20
14:23	nearby (3
modifications (1)	90:24;9
82:4	nearest (
modify (1) 7:25	11:9 necessari
moment (1)	28:5
33:19	necessary
Monica (1)	27:7,8;
69:14	91:16
Montana (2)	need (15)
5:21;7:9	6:18,19
more (16)	47:5;51
13:19;17:1;29:2;	53:23;6
31:20;35:9;38:12;	65:15;7
51:11;59:8;65:3; 72:5,6,18;73:11;	95:13,1 needing (
78:20;80:20;87:22	3:11;22
Mormon (1)	needs (10
82:20	40:25,2
most (6)	49:20;5
34:10,14;39:18;	75:17;8
57:10;86:21;94:19	neighbor
motion (10)	25:8;40
5:15;7:6,25,25;	51:16
8:12;19:1,17;88:1,8;	neighbor
96:22 motor (4)	8:25;12
motor (4) 62:20;64:11,12,18	46:24;5 72:21;7
o2:20;04:11,12,18 move (4)	87:23;8
3:11;5:1;7:24;	20;94:1
83:22	neighbor
moved (2)	63:11;9

30:1;80:10	neighboring (5)
Irs (1)	11:22;93:4;94:13,
80:5	18;95:9
nuch (10)	neighbors (16)
12:9;13:20;20:1;	12:16;25:12,19;
32:10;41:16;56:21;	40:15;47:1,2;48:1,
69:8;77:10;83:24;	12,17;51:9;52:1;
85:1	58:3;66:2;68:24;
fulholland (1)	82:2,5
82:2	neighbors' (2)
Iunicipal (1)	90:11;95:9
88:21	new (5)
Iurdock (4)	10:7;14:5,8,25;
66:25;69:10,12,13	32:3
nust (4)	newer (1)
69:16;70:16;	74:7
89:12;90:22	newer-built (1)
nyself (1)	74:10
13:6	next (9)
	4:14;5:17;18:9;
Ν	71:20;72:23;82:22;
	88:12;95:21;96:23
ame (13)	nice (1)
29:6,10;36:16;	76:11
60:16;67:2;69:11,	nobody (4)
13;71:16;75:21,23;	22:10,12;48:23;
77:18;83:7,10	79:3
arrow (1)	none (4)
47:9	38:9,9,22;67:8
atural (1)	nor (2)
86:20	80:5;95:3
earby (3)	normally (2)
90:24;92:3;95:5	72:11;81:22
earest (1)	north (2)
11:9	38:23;43:24
ecessarily (1)	northeast (1)
28:5	31:25
ecessary (4)	Northridge (1)
27:7,8;31:14;	67:5
91:16	northwest (1)
eed (15)	31:25
6:18,19,23;39:1;	note (1)
47:5;51:2;52:15;	46:14
53:23;63:18,19;	noted (2)
65:15;72:18;78:21;	68:12,20
95:13,14	notes (1)
eeding (2)	88:11
3:11;22:19	noticeable (1)
eeds (10)	28:3
40:25,25;41:1,1;	noticed (3)
49:20;52:15;58:3;	6:9;24:4;44:25
75:17;85:13;87:18	November (1)
eighbor (5)	20:1
25:8;40:12,14,15;	number (3)
51:16	51:17;61:24,24
eighborhood (15)	numerous (2)
8:25;12:5;40:13;	35:17;81:20
46:24;50:13;62:12;	
72:21;75:11;82:20;	0
87:23;89:18;93:4,	
20;94:16,21	000- (1)
eighborhoods (2)	97:5
62.11.04.4	abjectives (1)

32:21 observation (2) 72:5:73:1 observed (1) 72:24 obstruct (2) 12:2,2 obstructing (1) 93:15 obstruction (1) 25:23 obtain (1) 73:7 obviously (1) 50:1 occurred (2) 44:3;67:22 off (9) 3:7,19;14:6;33:13; 55:9;56:25;71:22; 75:24;76:19 offer (1) 92:17 office (9) 16:11;29:10;71:6; 75:13;78:8;79:13, 16;80:15;83:11 offices (2) 89:22;90:3 official (1) 85:12 once (2)11:14:73:6 one (49) 3:20;5:24;6:7; 8:19,24;10:4,5;12:6; 13:7;14:17;17:24; 21:23;24:12,16; 26:2;28:6,25;32:20, 22:37:4:39:11.18; 40:11,12,14,21; 41:15,15;43:3;51:2, 21;52:6;53:21; 55:24;57:21;65:21, 22;70:17;72:11; 73:11;77:13;78:14; 80:1,17;81:13; 86:21;88:18,19; 93:24 ones (3) 17:1:93:22:95:17 only (28) 11:7;21:11;25:11; 26:10,14;28:1,15; 39:7,11,13;45:15; 51:8;52:16;53:3,20; 54:2;64:17;68:11; 73:4,4;75:6;81:13; 89:4;90:25;91:2; 92:14,16:95:15 onto (1) 15:3 open (2)

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS January 15, 2014

15:1:31:12 operate (1) 94:25 opinion (2) 63:8;71:24 oppose (3) 41:19;77:7;85:10 opposed (2) 52:13;78:25 opposing (1) 79:3 opposition (7) 40:9,13,14;51:3; 52:5,6,10 orally (1) 34:3 order (16) 3:16,18;5:18; 11:10;20:25;32:9; 43:18;46:25;47:3; 48:7:49:17.18: 53:19;58:2;79:20; 88:16 ordinance (24) 21:24;24:15; 32:15;34:17,21;35:2, 4,6;51:25;55:17; 73:9,12;75:4;80:2; 82:8,17;83:17;84:19, 21:86:16:87:1.3; 88:24:93:9 original (8) 10:4,16:13:6,11; 14:12,23;76:3;83:17 originally (4) 13:22;15:6;56:14, 20Orinda (1) 96:3 **Oro** (3) 38:16;48:14;52:7 Others (3) 12:8;50:13;89:18 ourselves (1) 56:3 out (26) 3:9,18;5:17;20:7; 28:10;30:21;31:6, 23;33:1;36:5;39:1,3; 42:16;43:21;48:14; 50:25:56:22.23; 58:14;70:24;71:2; 72:25;81:6;82:2,10; 83:15 outline (1) 17:23 outlined (1) 39:24 outraged (1) 69:21 over (10) 14:16:16:12; 40:23;48:15;50:22;

objectives (1)

RECOLAR MEETING	1
53:15;70:16;77:21; 79:24;82:3	partial (1 9:18
overcome (1)	particula
68:11	10:2,8;
overheight (1)	13:8;14
18:4	32:8,10
over-in-height (1)	51:1;61
9:19	14,16,1
overturned (2)	88:15,1
20:21;70:11	particula
overview (1)	37:23;4
71:25	parties (1
own (6)	7:1
15:16;16:6;33:18;	partners
52:25;69:16;76:12	67:23
owned (2)	Patricia (
16:5;67:23	4:12
owner (10)	Paul (1)
11:23;15:15,15,	79:13
15;16:18;25:21;	pay (2)
39:19;69:17;71:20;	49:8;82
86:13	pending
owners (2)	69:18
67:11;76:10	people (1
07.11,70.10	6:12;31
Р	37:21;4
1	50:23,2
nackaga (1)	81:22
package (1) 6:7	percent (
pad (7)	39:9,10
33:15;43:18;	45:16,1
56:21;57:1;58:20;	53:20;5
84:10,11	61:17,1
pads (2)	16;79:2
42:16;44:4	perhaps
page (7)	10:9;11
28:1,7;38:13,14;	15:3;31
77:25;89:7,23	Perica (7
paid (1)	66:24,2
69:15	69:8;89
paper (1)	perimete
69:25	83:15
paragraph (1)	period (3
89:8	6:2,5;4
parallel (1)	permit (3
12:24	13:22;7
parameters (1)	permits (
75:2	13:12
parcel (7)	permitte
10:14;14:22,23;	28:15;3
15:11;33:8;41:11;	personal
43:3	40:20;4
parcels (2)	personal
12:7;26:25	58:17
Park (1)	pertainin
29:11	28:9;90
Parking (1)	petition (
3:9	31:11;6
part (13)	Philosop
10:13;25:24;	76:11
34:10;38:15;39:5,7,	phone (1)
7,11;58:21;75:9;	29:13
76:2;80:1;84:14	phones (1
	- ``

rtial (1)	3:7
r tial (1) 9:18	
rticular (23)	Photo (2) 37:24;38:6
10:2,8;12:12,25;	photos (6)
13:8;14:19;26:22;	37:19,22,23,24;
32:8,10;40:9;41:8;	38:3;43:21
51:1;61:8;62:2;64:4,	physical (2)
4,16,16,24;68:7,19;	13:20;48:1
38:15,17	pick (1)
rticularly (2)	67:9
37:23;40:1	Picking (1)
rties (1)	76:19
7:1	picture (3)
rtnership (1)	38:10,13,14
57:23	pictures (1)
tricia (1)	39:2
4:12	piece (1)
ul (1)	86:18
79:13	Pine (1)
y (2)	69:14
19:8;82:9	pinpointed (1)
nding (1)	70:14
59:18	Piszker (1)
ople (10)	90:1
5:12;31:4;34:15;	pitched (3)
37:21;40:23;41:19;	62:19,21,22
50:23,25;52:11;	place (1)
31:22	14:16
cent (19)	placed (1)
39:9,10,14;44:1;	80:13
45:16,16;47:5;	places (1)
53:20;54:12;57:1;	38:12
51:17,18,19,19;75:7,	plan (9)
16;79:24;80:14,15 •haps (5)	17:5,21,23;32:21;
10:9;11:20;12:1;	59:18;61:1;94:1,2,9 plan-check (2)
15:3;31:20	61:4,23
rica (7)	Planning (16)
56:24,25;67:4,4;	3:5,8,20;14:24;
59:8;89:22;90:1	32:9,16;50:16;
imeter (1)	60:25;61:6,23;76:8,
33:15	13;77:4;79:12;86:3,
riod (3)	5
5:2,5;40:22	plans (1)
-mit (3)	16:21
3:22;77:4;94:25	plan's (1)
mits (1)	28:8
13:12	plant (1)
mitted (2)	55:11
28:15;36:10	plead (1)
rsonal (3)	73:11
40:20;41:17;58:23	please (7)
sonally (1)	3:8;29:6;36:17;
58:17	51:21;60:17;70:19;
taining (2)	83:8
28:9;90:22	pleasing (3)
ition (2)	35:9;51:8;95:16
31:11;69:19 ilosophically (1)	plot (5) 17:5,21,22;59:18;
76:11	61:1
one (1)	Plus (1)
29:13	72:23
ones (1)	pm (2)
、 /	• ` ` '

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS January 15, 2014

3:2:97:4 podium (1) 76:8 point (15) 30:21:31:6.22; 33:1;34:2;68:19; 72:25;74:24,25; 76:18;81:10,13,16; 83:19;95:23 pointed (2) 48:14;81:5 point-of-order (1) 7:17 points (3) 77:9;79:15;81:4 policies (1) 94:8 policy (2) 25:1;93:13 political (4) 31:17;78:1,2; 85:16 pools (1) 47:3 portion (6) 11:7,9;32:2,2; 80:13;81:13 portions (1) 10:20 positive (3) 94:3,5,20 possessed (4) 27:10:67:11: 91:14.17 possible (2) 65:16,17 possibly (1) 4:14 practical (9) 21:25;23:6,11; 27:11:51:7:88:24: 89:13:91:20,24 practically (1) 51:8 precedent (7) 21:8;52:20;67:15, 18,21;68:25;94:20 precedential (7) 28:20;31:9;57:22; 67:17;68:4,4;93:18 preliminary (3) 42:12,15;61:12 prepared (1) 88:1 presence (1) 72:14 present (3) 3:14;46:18;92:6 presentation (3) 4:7;14:6;85:11 presented (7) 15:6;20:2,23; 31:20;46:15,19;

60:25 presently (1) 22:5 preservation (7) 27:8;53:17;55:17; 80:8;84:13;91:13,16 preserve (6) 25:1;28:4;32:21; 78:5;93:14,16 preserved (2) 38:11;39:15 preserving (7) 37:9;53:16;54:24; 56:16,19;94:3,4 President (2) 8:19;69:12 pretty (5) 12:12;20:1;37:3; 55:23;56:25 prevent (4) 23:1,22;89:16; 91:7 previous (5) 67:15,18;68:2; 78:8;84:2 previously (1) 68:5 price (1) 82:9 Primarily (1) 52:5 principal (1) 76:2 prior (3) 43:5;46:5;78:14 privilege (3) 73:7;75:5;94:25 pro (1) 76:6 probably (3) 17:1;24:11;75:13 problem (6) 29:19;30:5;34:24; 75:9;81:24;82:21 proceedings (1) 97:4 process (4) 28:17;37:8;61:4, 23 professional (1) 85:17 profit (1) 41:17 project (7) 17:16;23:20; 26:24;36:23;51:1; 80:13;85:21 projects (1) 41:9 prominent (1) 12:13 promote (1) 51:13

pronounce (1) 36:2 properties (29) 26:18,23;27:15; 32:5;35:13;37:4; 38:22;40:2;42:13, 15;53:13;54:5,15; pulled 58:12,16;72:21; 73:1;79:18;81:19, purch 20;82:6;90:24;92:1, 3,10,17;93:5;95:2,21 purpo property (143) 8:20;9:6,13;10:19, 20;11:23;15:16,21; 16:6,6,9;18:9;19:10, 23;20:2;21:15;22:5; 23:2;25:21;26:4,6, 10,14;27:9,10,13; 28:20;31:25;32:4,5, 11,14;33:4,14,15; pursu 34:7;35:12;38:7,9, 16,18,19,24;39:2,9, push (19,19;42:8,9;43:7, 17;44:10;45:10,21, pushe 24;46:17;47:12; 48:2,8;49:18;50:17, put (1 19;52:13;53:3,3,8, 19,23,24;54:2,2,7,7, 12,19,21;55:1;57:8, 11:58:11:63:18.20; 64:2:65:8,15:67:11, 22.24:68:14.15.22: 69:17,18;70:10,19; 71:20:72:17.22: 73:20,22,24;74:1,17; 76:1,10,12;77:15,17; quick 78:3,17:79:23,24; 81:23;83:2,15,22,25; 86:18,19;87:11,16, 21:89:15:90:17.19. 22,23,25;91:2,3,4,14, 15,17,18,21,25; 92:24;93:1,3,7,18; 95:4 proposal (1) 23:20 raise (proposed (14) 24:6,13;28:7; raised 30:18;35:2,4,6,16; 45:2;89:5;94:11,14, ran (1 16:96:9 proposing (1) 23:14 protection (1) 30:24 provide (6) 31:4;33:17;34:18; 35:22;67:21;94:6 provided (7) ration 21:4:32:7:34:4: 35:14,16;59:23; reache 76:17 provisions (1) read (

88:23	21.4.24.10.42.0.
	31:4;34:18;43:8;
public (11)	71:22;77:25;78:20
18:16;27:25;	reading (3)
28:12;29:9;30:23;	12:3;56:4,9
32:13;69:21;85:7;	ready (2)
92:22,24;96:24	4:14;66:19
pulled (2)	real (2)
13:12,22	70:8;86:15
purchase (1)	reality (2)
68:13	66:8;75:14
purpose (3)	really (12)
46:13;93:8,13	15:6;31:1,4;40:8;
purposes (12)	43:20;56:9;61:16;
22:1;32:15;45:6,	62:25;66:8;70:1;
10;46:7,8,10;47:5;	74:23;92:7
53:25;89:1;94:2;	reapplication (1)
95:14	42:25
pursuant (1)	reason (11)
88:21	24:5;26:21;45:8;
pursue (1)	64:17;65:20,22;
31:13	73:5;85:20;86:12,
push (1)	15;95:6
80:3	reasoning (2)
pushed (4)	20:8;23:24
15:3;72:9;74:3,4	reasons (15)
put (12)	23:22;24:4,8;
15:21;21:19;	27:16,17;63:6;64:20,
25:15;41:2;50:18,	23;65:21;90:12;
19;54:25;55:8,8;	91:23;92:5;94:22;
56:15;72:2;73:13	95:11,25
_	rebuttal (4)
Δ	70.0.00.05.00.0
Q	79:2,9;80:25;92:8
Q	recall (1)
Q quarter (2)	recall (1) 43:9
quarter (2) 92:14,15	recall (1)
quarter (2) 92:14,15 quick (5)	recall (1) 43:9 receive (2) 22:16,22
quarter (2) 92:14,15 quick (5) 8:19,20;17:1;60:4;	recall (1) 43:9 receive (2)
quarter (2) 92:14,15 quick (5) 8:19,20;17:1;60:4; 81:4	recall (1) 43:9 receive (2) 22:16,22 received (8) 8:21;17:2;27:16;
quarter (2) 92:14,15 quick (5) 8:19,20;17:1;60:4; 81:4 quickly (1)	recall (1) 43:9 receive (2) 22:16,22 received (8) 8:21;17:2;27:16; 90:24;92:4;93:6;
quarter (2) 92:14,15 quick (5) 8:19,20;17:1;60:4; 81:4 quickly (1) 62:25	recall (1) 43:9 receive (2) 22:16,22 received (8) 8:21;17:2;27:16; 90:24;92:4;93:6; 95:4;96:24
quarter (2) 92:14,15 quick (5) 8:19,20;17:1;60:4; 81:4 quickly (1) 62:25 quite (3)	recall (1) 43:9 receive (2) 22:16,22 received (8) 8:21;17:2;27:16; 90:24;92:4;93:6; 95:4;96:24 recognition (1)
quarter (2) 92:14,15 quick (5) 8:19,20;17:1;60:4; 81:4 quickly (1) 62:25	recall (1) 43:9 receive (2) 22:16,22 received (8) 8:21;17:2;27:16; 90:24;92:4;93:6; 95:4;96:24 recognition (1) 88:2
quarter (2) 92:14,15 quick (5) 8:19,20;17:1;60:4; 81:4 quickly (1) 62:25 quite (3) 12:8;31:2;76:20	recall (1) 43:9 receive (2) 22:16,22 received (8) 8:21;17:2;27:16; 90:24;92:4;93:6; 95:4;96:24 recognition (1) 88:2 recognize (1)
quarter (2) 92:14,15 quick (5) 8:19,20;17:1;60:4; 81:4 quickly (1) 62:25 quite (3)	recall (1) 43:9 receive (2) 22:16,22 received (8) 8:21;17:2;27:16; 90:24;92:4;93:6; 95:4;96:24 recognition (1) 88:2 recognize (1) 37:5
quarter (2) 92:14,15 quick (5) 8:19,20;17:1;60:4; 81:4 quickly (1) 62:25 quite (3) 12:8;31:2;76:20 R	recall (1) 43:9 receive (2) 22:16,22 received (8) 8:21;17:2;27:16; 90:24;92:4;93:6; 95:4;96:24 recognition (1) 88:2 recognize (1) 37:5 record (12)
quarter (2) 92:14,15 quick (5) 8:19,20;17:1;60:4; 81:4 quickly (1) 62:25 quite (3) 12:8;31:2;76:20 R raise (1)	recall (1) 43:9 receive (2) 22:16,22 received (8) 8:21;17:2;27:16; 90:24;92:4;93:6; 95:4;96:24 recognition (1) 88:2 recognize (1) 37:5 record (12) 5:23;29:6;33:10;
quarter (2) 92:14,15 quick (5) 8:19,20;17:1;60:4; 81:4 quickly (1) 62:25 quite (3) 12:8;31:2;76:20 R raise (1) 93:19	recall (1) 43:9 receive (2) 22:16,22 received (8) 8:21;17:2;27:16; 90:24;92:4;93:6; 95:4;96:24 recognition (1) 88:2 recognize (1) 37:5 record (12) 5:23;29:6;33:10; 36:17;46:7;60:16;
quarter (2) 92:14,15 quick (5) 8:19,20;17:1;60:4; 81:4 quickly (1) 62:25 quite (3) 12:8;31:2;76:20 R raise (1) 93:19 raised (2)	recall (1) 43:9 receive (2) 22:16,22 received (8) 8:21;17:2;27:16; 90:24;92:4;93:6; 95:4;96:24 recognition (1) 88:2 recognize (1) 37:5 record (12) 5:23;29:6;33:10; 36:17;46:7;60:16; 67:2;68:5;69:11;
quarter (2) 92:14,15 quick (5) 8:19,20;17:1;60:4; 81:4 quickly (1) 62:25 quite (3) 12:8;31:2;76:20 R raise (1) 93:19 raised (2) 33:14;43:18	recall (1) 43:9 receive (2) 22:16,22 received (8) 8:21;17:2;27:16; 90:24;92:4;93:6; 95:4;96:24 recognition (1) 88:2 recognize (1) 37:5 record (12) 5:23;29:6;33:10; 36:17;46:7;60:16; 67:2;68:5;69:11; 71:16;75:22;83:8
quarter (2) 92:14,15 quick (5) 8:19,20;17:1;60:4; 81:4 quickly (1) 62:25 quite (3) 12:8;31:2;76:20 R raise (1) 93:19 raised (2) 33:14;43:18 ran (1)	recall (1) 43:9 receive (2) 22:16,22 received (8) 8:21;17:2;27:16; 90:24;92:4;93:6; 95:4;96:24 recognition (1) 88:2 recognize (1) 37:5 record (12) 5:23;29:6;33:10; 36:17;46:7;60:16; 67:2;68:5;69:11; 71:16;75:22;83:8 recorded (1)
quarter (2) 92:14,15 quick (5) 8:19,20;17:1;60:4; 81:4 quickly (1) 62:25 quite (3) 12:8;31:2;76:20 R raise (1) 93:19 raised (2) 33:14;43:18 ran (1) 73:15	recall (1) 43:9 receive (2) 22:16,22 received (8) 8:21;17:2;27:16; 90:24;92:4;93:6; 95:4;96:24 recognition (1) 88:2 recognize (1) 37:5 record (12) 5:23;29:6;33:10; 36:17;46:7;60:16; 67:2;68:5;69:11; 71:16;75:22;83:8 recorded (1) 84:15
quarter (2) 92:14,15 quick (5) 8:19,20;17:1;60:4; 81:4 quickly (1) 62:25 quite (3) 12:8;31:2;76:20 R raise (1) 93:19 raised (2) 33:14;43:18 ran (1) 73:15 RANDA (21)	recall (1) 43:9 receive (2) 22:16,22 received (8) 8:21;17:2;27:16; 90:24;92:4;93:6; 95:4;96:24 recognition (1) 88:2 recognize (1) 37:5 record (12) 5:23;29:6;33:10; 36:17;46:7;60:16; 67:2;68:5;69:11; 71:16;75:22;83:8 recorded (1) 84:15 records (1)
quarter (2) 92:14,15 quick (5) 8:19,20;17:1;60:4; 81:4 quickly (1) 62:25 quite (3) 12:8;31:2;76:20 R raise (1) 93:19 raised (2) 33:14;43:18 ran (1) 73:15 RANDA (21) 4:19;5:4,6,8,10,12,	recall (1) 43:9 receive (2) 22:16,22 received (8) 8:21;17:2;27:16; 90:24;92:4;93:6; 95:4;96:24 recognition (1) 88:2 recognize (1) 37:5 record (12) 5:23;29:6;33:10; 36:17;46:7;60:16; 67:2;68:5;69:11; 71:16;75:22;83:8 recorded (1) 84:15 records (1) 3:13
quarter (2) 92:14,15 quick (5) 8:19,20;17:1;60:4; 81:4 quickly (1) 62:25 quite (3) 12:8;31:2;76:20 R raise (1) 93:19 raised (2) 33:14;43:18 ran (1) 73:15 RANDA (21) 4:19;5:4,6,8,10,12, 14;7:3,13,20;8:4,6,8,	recall (1) 43:9 receive (2) 22:16,22 received (8) 8:21;17:2;27:16; 90:24;92:4;93:6; 95:4;96:24 recognition (1) 88:2 recognize (1) 37:5 record (12) 5:23;29:6;33:10; 36:17;46:7;60:16; 67:2;68:5;69:11; 71:16;75:22;83:8 recorded (1) 84:15 records (1) 3:13 redesign (1)
quarter (2) 92:14,15 quick (5) 8:19,20;17:1;60:4; 81:4 quickly (1) 62:25 quite (3) 12:8;31:2;76:20 R raise (1) 93:19 raised (2) 33:14;43:18 ran (1) 73:15 RANDA (21) 4:19;5:4,6,8,10,12, 14;7:3,13,20;8:4,6,8, 10,12;96:14,16,18,	recall (1) 43:9 receive (2) 22:16,22 received (8) 8:21;17:2;27:16; 90:24;92:4;93:6; 95:4;96:24 recognition (1) 88:2 recognize (1) 37:5 record (12) 5:23;29:6;33:10; 36:17;46:7;60:16; 67:2;68:5;69:11; 71:16;75:22;83:8 recorded (1) 84:15 records (1) 3:13 redesign (1) 22:18
quarter (2) 92:14,15 quick (5) 8:19,20;17:1;60:4; 81:4 quickly (1) 62:25 quite (3) 12:8;31:2;76:20 R raise (1) 93:19 raised (2) 33:14;43:18 ran (1) 73:15 RANDA (21) 4:19;5:4,6,8,10,12, 14;7:3,13,20;8:4,6,8, 10,12;96:14,16,18, 20,22;97:1	recall (1) 43:9 receive (2) 22:16,22 received (8) 8:21;17:2;27:16; 90:24;92:4;93:6; 95:4;96:24 recognition (1) 88:2 recognize (1) 37:5 record (12) 5:23;29:6;33:10; 36:17;46:7;60:16; 67:2;68:5;69:11; 71:16;75:22;83:8 recorded (1) 84:15 records (1) 3:13 redesign (1) 22:18 refer (2)
quarter (2) 92:14,15 quick (5) 8:19,20;17:1;60:4; 81:4 quickly (1) 62:25 quite (3) 12:8;31:2;76:20 R raise (1) 93:19 raised (2) 33:14;43:18 ran (1) 73:15 RANDA (21) 4:19;5:4,6,8,10,12, 14;7:3,13,20;8:4,6,8, 10,12;96:14,16,18, 20,22;97:1 ranges (1)	recall (1) 43:9 receive (2) 22:16,22 received (8) 8:21;17:2;27:16; 90:24;92:4;93:6; 95:4;96:24 recognition (1) 88:2 recognize (1) 37:5 record (12) 5:23;29:6;33:10; 36:17;46:7;60:16; 67:2;68:5;69:11; 71:16;75:22;83:8 recorded (1) 84:15 records (1) 3:13 redesign (1) 22:18 refer (2) 51:15;77:25
quarter (2) 92:14,15 quick (5) 8:19,20;17:1;60:4; 81:4 quickly (1) 62:25 quite (3) 12:8;31:2;76:20 R raise (1) 93:19 raised (2) 33:14;43:18 ran (1) 73:15 RANDA (21) 4:19;5:4,6,8,10,12, 14;7:3,13,20;8:4,6,8, 10,12;96:14,16,18, 20,22;97:1 ranges (1) 34:6	recall (1) 43:9 receive (2) 22:16,22 received (8) 8:21;17:2;27:16; 90:24;92:4;93:6; 95:4;96:24 recognition (1) 88:2 record (12) 5:23;29:6;33:10; 36:17;46:7;60:16; 67:2;68:5;69:11; 71:16;75:22;83:8 recorded (1) 84:15 records (1) 3:13 redesign (1) 22:18 refer (2) 51:15;77:25 reference (3)
quarter (2) 92:14,15 quick (5) 8:19,20;17:1;60:4; 81:4 quickly (1) 62:25 quite (3) 12:8;31:2;76:20 R raise (1) 93:19 raised (2) 33:14;43:18 ran (1) 73:15 RANDA (21) 4:19;5:4,6,8,10,12, 14;7:3,13,20;8:4,6,8, 10,12;96:14,16,18, 20,22;97:1 ranges (1) 34:6 rationale (1)	recall (1) 43:9 receive (2) 22:16,22 received (8) 8:21;17:2;27:16; 90:24;92:4;93:6; 95:4;96:24 recognition (1) 88:2 recognize (1) 37:5 record (12) 5:23;29:6;33:10; 36:17;46:7;60:16; 67:2;68:5;69:11; 71:16;75:22;83:8 recorded (1) 84:15 records (1) 3:13 redesign (1) 22:18 refer (2) 51:15;77:25 reference (3) 84:18,20;95:18
quarter (2) 92:14,15 quick (5) 8:19,20;17:1;60:4; 81:4 quickly (1) 62:25 quite (3) 12:8;31:2;76:20 R raise (1) 93:19 raised (2) 33:14;43:18 ran (1) 73:15 RANDA (21) 4:19;5:4,6,8,10,12, 14;7:3,13,20;8:4,6,8, 10,12;96:14,16,18, 20,22;97:1 ranges (1) 34:6 rationale (1) 13:15	recall (1) 43:9 receive (2) 22:16,22 received (8) 8:21;17:2;27:16; 90:24;92:4;93:6; 95:4;96:24 recognition (1) 88:2 recognize (1) 37:5 record (12) 5:23;29:6;33:10; 36:17;46:7;60:16; 67:2;68:5;69:11; 71:16;75:22;83:8 recorded (1) 84:15 records (1) 3:13 redesign (1) 22:18 refer (2) 51:15;77:25 reference (3) 84:18,20;95:18 referenced (2)
quarter (2) 92:14,15 quick (5) 8:19,20;17:1;60:4; 81:4 quickly (1) 62:25 quite (3) 12:8;31:2;76:20 R raise (1) 93:19 raised (2) 33:14;43:18 ran (1) 73:15 RANDA (21) 4:19;5:4,6,8,10,12, 14;7:3,13,20;8:4,6,8, 10,12;96:14,16,18, 20,22;97:1 ranges (1) 34:6 rationale (1) 13:15 reaches (1)	recall (1) 43:9 receive (2) 22:16,22 received (8) 8:21;17:2;27:16; 90:24;92:4;93:6; 95:4;96:24 recognition (1) 88:2 recognize (1) 37:5 record (12) 5:23;29:6;33:10; 36:17;46:7;60:16; 67:2;68:5;69:11; 71:16;75:22;83:8 recorded (1) 84:15 records (1) 3:13 redesign (1) 22:18 refer (2) 51:15;77:25 reference (3) 84:18,20;95:18 referenced (2) 35:6;90:2
quarter (2) 92:14,15 quick (5) 8:19,20;17:1;60:4; 81:4 quickly (1) 62:25 quite (3) 12:8;31:2;76:20 R raise (1) 93:19 raised (2) 33:14;43:18 ran (1) 73:15 RANDA (21) 4:19;5:4,6,8,10,12, 14;7:3,13,20;8:4,6,8, 10,12;96:14,16,18, 20,22;97:1 ranges (1) 34:6 rationale (1) 13:15 reaches (1) 80:14	recall (1) 43:9 receive (2) 22:16,22 received (8) 8:21;17:2;27:16; 90:24;92:4;93:6; 95:4;96:24 recognition (1) 88:2 recognize (1) 37:5 record (12) 5:23;29:6;33:10; 36:17;46:7;60:16; 67:2;68:5;69:11; 71:16;75:22;83:8 recorded (1) 84:15 records (1) 3:13 redesign (1) 22:18 refer (2) 51:15;77:25 reference (3) 84:18,20;95:18 referenced (2) 35:6;90:2 referring (1)
quarter (2) 92:14,15 quick (5) 8:19,20;17:1;60:4; 81:4 quickly (1) 62:25 quite (3) 12:8;31:2;76:20 R raise (1) 93:19 raised (2) 33:14;43:18 ran (1) 73:15 RANDA (21) 4:19;5:4,6,8,10,12, 14;7:3,13,20;8:4,6,8, 10,12;96:14,16,18, 20,22;97:1 ranges (1) 34:6 rationale (1) 13:15 reaches (1)	recall (1) 43:9 receive (2) 22:16,22 received (8) 8:21;17:2;27:16; 90:24;92:4;93:6; 95:4;96:24 recognition (1) 88:2 recognize (1) 37:5 record (12) 5:23;29:6;33:10; 36:17;46:7;60:16; 67:2;68:5;69:11; 71:16;75:22;83:8 recorded (1) 84:15 records (1) 3:13 redesign (1) 22:18 refer (2) 51:15;77:25 reference (3) 84:18,20;95:18 referenced (2) 35:6;90:2

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS January 15, 2014

reflect (1)

3:13

regarding (7)

regardless (1)

regulations (5)

34:25:89:1

22:2;28:9,11;

25:16

relate (1)

67:16

related (1)

relating (1)

reluctance (1)

reluctant (1)

remaining (2)

30:24

86:1

85:10

12:6.7

remand (1)

remanded (1)

remember (6)

71:10

19:6

remove (2)

repeat (2)

report (9)

reporter (1)

represent (3)

88:3

95:23

13:10,17

represents (1)

78:19

92:6

requested (2)

requests (2)

require (1)

28:8

18:12;61:8

4:21:14:18

request (14)

represented (3)

10:17:19:1

31:5:33:9

35:23;89:2.19

5:18

required (5) 10:11:11:19:61:4: 67:8;90:20 9:1;37:6;40:6; requirement (2) 81:9,11 41:23,23,24;91:13 requirements (6) 39:22,25;41:22, 25:49:12:57:15 requires (4) 32:9:37:11:57:2: 90:21 resent (1) 85:15 reservations (1) 85:20 residence (3) 24:6;45:2;89:5 resident (2) 51:16;77:20 residential (1) 94:4 residents (1) 78:24 respect (3) 41:4;85:12;86:4 respectfully (1) 77:6 12:10:16:8:24:2; respects (1) 54:7;55:6;74:8 93:4 response (2) 57:17:63:24 responsive (2) 63:11:66:1 rest (2) 39:15:54:11 3:19;4:1;21:14; 22:16;26:8;34:19; restraints (2) 48:2,18 restricted (1) 57:1 result (2) 8:24;51:23;69:17 21:24:88:24 representative (7) resulting (1) 13:11;25:22;29:5; 35:8 results (1) 36:22;43:5;46:6; 35:8 representatives (2) retaining (5) 33:12,18;41:23; 43:22;54:21 22:10;77:16;81:25 retired (1) 67:5 reverse (1) 35:19 9:24;10:1;13:2; reversed (2) 14:23;17:14;20:9; 19:18;70:8 35:18;45:1;68:3; reviewed (1) 71:2;80:10,18;89:4; 61:5 reviewing (1) 23:13 Right (37) 6:24;18:9,23; 26:19,24;27:9;29:3; 30:14:39:6:40:16; 41:10;48:8,8,9,19,

Min-U-Script®

REGULAR MEETING	r			January 13, 2014
23;49:18,21;50:21;	12,13;22:2,4,12,19;	self-imposed (3)	50:12;58:3;62:12;	small (1)
51:4,7;55:9;56:11,	25:5;29:18;32:4,6;	27:3;55:8;95:13	67:19,24;68:23;	80:13
17;57:12;58:22;	33:7;40:3,6,15;	sensitive (1)	80:16;81:19;92:5	smaller (4)
66:13,13;67:10;	41:20;42:18,21;47:7,	52:1	similarly (1)	48:5,6;50:2;51:12
71:12;72:23;73:19,	25;57:19,21;59:17;	sent (1)	92:1	Smith (1)
23;88:4;91:14,17;	60:21;67:12,13,13,	52:11	Simultaneous (2)	36:21
95:21	14,14,23;68:22;69:4;	September (7)	15:18;38:5	solar (1)
rights (1)	70:6,13;71:4;81:7,7;	10:6;15:8;18:12;	Simultaneously (1)	64:22
57:10	82:4;87:11;90:19;	19:17,22;89:19,23	7:2	sold (1)
rises (1)	91:4,8,9,18,23;92:4,	set (9)	single (4)	41:13
33:16	5,18,25;93:21;95:2,	5:23;11:4;12:8;	30:23;51:16;	solely (4)
river (1)	5,6,11,17,19,19,20,	70:13;90:4,6;94:19;	52:10;88:18	45:9;46:10;63:4,5
79:25	22	95:5;96:11	single-family (2)	somehow (1)
Road (21)	Santa (1)	setback (4)	9:20;94:13	41:5
8:17;12:3;32:23;	69:14	12:9;15:14;43:25;	sit (1)	someone (4)
34:3,6,14;38:16;	satisfy (2)	53:18	54:14	43:9;50:14;57:25;
41:3;43:25;48:14;	85:13,19	setbacks (6)	site (49)	84:12
67:23;71:19;72:24;	saucer (1)	10:22;11:19;14:9;	8:20;9:21,22,24;	somewhat (1)
75:6,10,15,24,24;	72:5	15:1;79:25;94:8	10:8,9,20,24;11:17,	43:7
76:1,21;77:19	Sausalito (1)	setting (1)	20;13:7,20;23:22;	Sorry (6)
	89:11	76:7		30:11;33:11;34:1;
roadway (1)			25:15,15;37:11,21;	
32:25 Roland (1)	Save (2) 89:9;90:20	several (2)	39:13,14;40:6,6; 41:5,8,17,20;43:11,	36:13;59:21;60:9 sort (14)
		42:4;55:5		
60:18	saw (6)	severe (1)	24;44:2;47:4,5;	11:1,2,12,14,15;
rolling (1)	9:5;24:21;28:1,10;	48:18	48:11,18;51:12;	12:2;15:3;17:14,23;
4:22	59:1;89:2	severely (2)	53:19,20,20,22;55:5,	33:5;50:2,5;82:8;
roof (27)	saying (34)	48:11;57:1	6;58:21;61:14,14;	87:12
24:6;38:24,25;	4:12;13:11;16:6;	Shana (1)	62:2,19;63:22;64:13,	sounds (3)
39:5;45:3,12,12,13,	22:17;23:16;28:13,	3:23	21;72:3;89:7	18:14;74:15;87:19
13,19,24;46:11;	18;35:10;42:8;43:9;	shape (3)	sited (2)	source (1)
48:16;62:21,23;	44:10,12,21;47:23;	11:1;26:4;90:17	63:21;64:5	51:17
65:12,13,19,22;	50:3,5,5,8,10,13,22;	share (1)	sites (1)	south (1)
77:22;81:6;84:6,6;	51:4;52:4;53:12;	76:15	13:25	82:20
86:25,25;89:6;95:24	57:24;58:14,21;	SHAWN (6)	siting (1)	southwest (2)
roofs (1)	61:13;63:17;65:5,9;	78:7,12;79:10,12,	64:20	32:1;34:7
62:20	71:8;75:6,16	12;80:23	sits (1)	space (1)
Roscomare (1)	scale (1)	shed (1)	38:19	15:2
77:19	94:7	62:25	situate (1)	speak (3)
roughly (3)	scenario (1)	short (1)	64:13	3:8;15:25;94:9
33:12;61:15;80:14	65:18	58:20	situated (1)	speaker (2)
route (1)	Second (11)	show (1)	64:13	3:9;79:6
80:17	5:3;8:3;13:18;	48:10	situation (3)	speakers (5)
rules (2)	25:24;26:2;30:21;	shown (1)	6:3;57:25;80:16	29:9;36:9,15;
76:14;86:17	83:19;89:8;90:13;	34:4	size (8)	66:18,24
ruling (2)	96:2,13	shows (1)	22:19;26:4;48:12;	speaking (6)
85:24;86:14	Section (2)	38:6	61:6;68:22,24;	7:2;15:18;38:5;
rulings (1)	69:23;88:21	side (10)	86:24;90:17	65:3;69:15;77:23
20:21	seeing (3)	10:13;34:10;36:6;	slightly (2)	spec (1)
run (1)	12:10;40:22;78:22	38:8;44:18;45:15;	20:9,10	41:12
69:7	seek (6)	50:15;58:18;76:7;	slope (22)	special (18)
running (3)	39:17;48:9,19,22,	78:20	11:18;14:9;17:5,	11:25;12:13;
26:11;53:4;91:1	23;50:23	sides (1)	12;32:7,19;35:1,5;	13:19;23:21;26:1,3,
runs (7)	seem (1)	24:24	39:4;45:19;53:22;	7;27:3,11;73:7;75:5;
16:12;53:9,10;	74:17	sight (1)	54:9,22;59:23;60:6,	90:15,16,21;91:6,19,
74:10;79:17,22;91:5	seemed (4)	81:17	6,25;61:2,3,12,21;	22;94:25
	14:16;20:7;46:5;	significance (2)	77:15	specific (6)
S	55:20	21:18;96:6	sloped (1)	14:17;17:18;42:3;
	seemingly (1)	significant (3)	33:6	44:15;60:6;65:4
saddened (1)	72:14	43:10;44:18;72:21	slopes (6)	specifically (3)
31:2	seems (2)	significantly (1)	11:3,15;39:4;	15:8;17:13;34:24
same (67)	3:10;46:5	35:13	44:19;45:10;54:8	specifics (1)
9:5,24;14:1;15:15;	sees (1)	similar (12)	sloping (1)	13:4
18:11,12,16;20:2,8,	86:7	21:16;47:1;49:19;	31:24	specify (1)

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS January 15, 2014

REGULAR MEETING	r
30:18	-
spent (5)	str
56:2,3,8;85:2; 86:22	str
spoke (1)	511
82:15	1
square (6) 22:12;32:10;	
61:16,17,25;62:1	
square-footage (1)	
32:15 staff (9)	-
3:9;6:11;8:17;	8
9:13;36:8;60:22; 61:1;86:5;88:12	۶ str
stand (3)	511
48:13,14;82:10	1
stands (2) 14:25;52:25	e e
start (3)	str
3:19;29:3;85:10	8
started (7) 14:6;15:20;16:22;	str
23:7;41:11;56:14;	str
76:3 state (3)	str
29:5;36:16;60:16	Su
stated (4)	str
14:9;28:7;89:22; 94:23	str
states (2)	7
76:17;84:2 staunch (1)	(ctr
80:8	str
steep (2)	
54:9,13 step (1)	stu
35:7	stu
Steve (7) 8:22;71:15;77:12,	ctu
18,19;78:9,13	stu
still (4)	sul
6:1;17:21;86:18; 87:20	ہ sut
Stone (57)	Sur
12:23;13:8;14:19;	2
15:4;16:13;18:10, 20;19:9,19;20:2,16;	sul
21:7,9;22:3;24:2;	1
26:2;32:22;34:3,6,8, 14;37:12,15,16;38:8,	sut
10;40:10,17;42:8,10,	sut
22;43:6,25;44:5;	3
52:19;53:1,11; 57:20;67:22;68:3;	
71:19,20;72:24;75:6,	ģ
10,15,24,24;76:2,21;	Su
78:17;85:24,25; 86:21,23;91:5;95:18	sul
stop (6)	2
40:25,25;41:1; 52:15,15,16	sub
stories (1)	Sui

76:25	suco
raight (3)	12
5:24;74:10,12	suff
ream (40)	3:
26:11;30:25;37:7,	Suit
10;39:5,8,15;40:4;	29
41:23;45:11;53:4,7,	sun
14;54:8,24;55:10,17;	64
56:15,16,19;72:10;	Sun
73:3,18;74:1,10,15,	6
16,19,20,23;78:6,10;	Sup
79:17,19;81:6;	90
84:23;86:19,20;	[sup
87:14;91:1	4
reet (14)	80
10:22,23;11:2,5;	89
12:7;26:9;27:20;	sup
38:21;44:4,12,19;	80
64:12;69:14;84:11	sup
reets (1)	73
86:22	sup
rict (2)	4
21:23;88:23	sup
ronger (1)	80
72:22	Sup
ruck (1)	3
28:6	sure
ructural (1)	2′
46:11	5
ructure (4)	6
72:9;75:12;76:23;	suri
93:21	30
ructures (8)	8
24:17;34:23;35:1; 74:2,3,4;93:10,11	suri
udio (1)	4 suri
38:17	6
udying (1)	suri
56:4	2
uff (1)	swii
15:2 Ibdivision (1)	4'
84:14 Ibject (4)	
24:23;25:12; 28:17;90:16	tabl
bjective (6)	take
24:8;62:17;66:4,8,	79
10;90:12	talk
Ibmittals (1)	32
46:24	80
Ibmitted (11)	talk
37:19;40:11;	1′
43:22;68:8,20;	1(
71:21;77:9;89:24;	talk
90:6,9;95:7	6
ubsequent (1)	84
14:22	tall
l bstantial (6)	34
27:9;40:22;89:12;	Tan
90:24;91:14,17	6'
Ibstantially (3)	19
39:13;95:1,22	6

succinctly (1)	Т
12:25 sufficient (1) 35:15	te
Suite (1)	te
29:11 sun (1)	te
64:22 Sunset (1)	te
60:18 Supervisors (1)	te
96:4 support (8)	te
41:18;78:10; 80:18;82:11;83:3;	te
89:18;91:8;92:17 supporter (1)	te
80:8 supportive (1)	te
78:7 suppose (1)	te
41:7 supposed (2)	
86:25;93:16 Supreme (2)	
31:14;40:18 sure (9)	Т
27:18;41:21;51:5; 56:6;60:15,23;	tł
61:20;62:16;84:12 surround (4)	tł
38:22;49:20;57:4; 81:21	tł
surrounded (1) 44:22	tł
surrounding (3) 63:11;66:2;91:4	tł
surroundings (2) 26:5;90:18	tł
swimming (1) 47:3	•1
11.5	Т
Т	ti
tables (1) 36:23	ti
takeaway (1) 79:15	ti
talk (5) 32:13;36:7;77:14;	ti
80:21;82:19 talked (6)	
17:4;72:20;84:5, 10,11,13	to
talking (5) 65:18;72:8;82:23;	
84:7;87:15 tall (1)	
34:22	to
Tania (13) 67:1;69:10;71:18,	to
6/11,69:10;71:18, 19;73:16,19,23;74:2, 6,21,24;76:19;77:15	u
0,21,24,70:19,77:13	

anner (1) 75:25 ear (1) 80:4 echnically (2) 61:5,22 elephone (1) 8:21 emple (1) 82:20 ennis (1) 47:2 erms (1) 63:4 errace (3) 11:12;24:17;83:23 erraced (2) 41:6;93:10 erracing (2) 34:25;35:2 estimony (10) 16:9;59:14;62:9; 89:22,24;90:5; 91:10;92:8;93:6; 96:1 hanks (1) 85:3 herefore (2) 13:13,23 hird (2) 4:22;91:12 hough (5) 4:12;6:11;78:3; 90:3.6 houghts (2) 73:13;87:12 housand (1) 37:22 hree (4) 14:15:43:2:76:24; 92:11 'hus (2) 34:25;48:24 ie (1) 50:18 ied (4) 26:23,25;27:1,4 meline (1) 18:19 imes (4) 6:4;42:24;51:3; 55:5 oday (14) 3:14,23,23;10:6; 12:16;26:8;33:3; 40:11;52:8;54:14; 73:6;83:18;91:11; 93:6 oday's (1) 8:23 ogether (4) 14:16;26:24; 50:18;88:11

Tokunaga (81) 3:21,22;4:3,11; 5:23;6:9,15,17,21, 25;9:3,14,16;12:21, 22;13:6;14:3,10,12; 15:12,17,23,25;16:4, 7,14,16,19,23;17:7, 12,22;18:6,14,17,24; 19:3,7,11,15,20,24; 20:3.10.13.19.24; 21:5,9,13,19;22:7, 14,21,24;23:3,12,13; 24:9,19;25:7,10,14, 21;26:12,16,20,25; 27:4,17;28:13,22; 29:9;31:19;32:7,12; 33:2;59:17;84:1; 85:16;86:6 told (2) 8:25;32:12 tonight (2) 4:6;9:9 took (2) 71:11;80:17 top (6) 37:17;38:14,15; 78:14;79:20,21 topo (1) 17:15 topographical (2) 26:8;70:2 topography (7) 11:13:15:2:26:4; 67:17,24;90:17;91:3 touch (1) 83:9 touched (2) 80:9;92:6 tough (1) 20:15 towards (8) 13:19:17:13: 44:20;45:11,11,21, 21;54:8 tower (1) 32:24 towering (1) 75:12 tract (4) 5:25;80:11;82:1; 84:1 transcript (5) 22:9;24:22;43:8; 89:2,23 treat (2) 32:5;74:1 treated (1) 40:2 true (2) 54:17;78:6 truly (1) 73:5 try (2)

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS January 15, 2014

REGULAR WIELTING	5			January 13, 2014
63:15;80:2	18:22;70:5	58:1,4;62:13;63:7,	voluntarily (2)	what's (4)
trying (3)	uphold (1)	18,19;64:3;65:16;	26:23;84:15	44:8;52:9;67:19;
23:4;56:10;73:7	73:12	67:7,8;68:3,12;70:4,	voluntary (1)	86:10
turn (1)	upon (2)	5,7,7,23,23;71:5;	84:16	whatsoever (5)
			84:10 VTT-71898-CN-A1 (1)	
3:9	92:1;95:1	76:16;77:5,7,17;		9:1;20:16;65:10;
twice (1)	upward (2)	78:25;81:11;82:12;	5:18	86:5,6
67:25	33:6,16	83:3;84:8,8;88:10,	vu (1)	whole (3)
Twining (13)	usable (4)	16,20;89:4,15,16;	12:23	13:9;37:8;69:24
8:22,23;9:7,12;	53:20,21,23;57:2	90:11,12,14;91:8,15;	***	wind (1)
71:15,15;75:19;	use (33)	92:5,21,23;93:3,7,	W	64:22
77:12,18,19;78:9,13;	27:9;28:21;30:15;	12,17,25;94:24;95:5,		wise (2)
80:7	36:24;39:19,20;	9,10,13,16;96:7	Wait (2)	50:21;72:2
two (22)	40:20;41:16,17,20;	variances (5)	30:4;59:7	within (8)
6:4;12:6;14:15;	44:1;47:4,25;48:8;	18:11;20:25;	waiting (1)	23:8;25:5;48:19;
18:8;26:23;37:21;	49:18;51:11,12;	27:18;81:19;82:5	6:5	54:6;57:11;62:1;
40:11,15;41:13,14;	53:24;57:10,11;	varied (4)	waiver (1)	64:10;73:10
43:2,22;50:4;56:23;	67:14;69:2,22;	45:24;65:12,13,19	84:1	without (13)
61:14;67:2,9;71:16;	70:19;76:13;77:4;	various (3)	walking (1)	22:5,19;47:12;
75:22;81:1,2;83:7	79:13;81:12;91:14,	16:10;53:16;64:20	56:24	49:2;62:13,13;63:18,
type (8)	17;94:8,10,25	vary (1)	wall (7)	19;64:2;90:11;91:8;
41:18;57:3,25;	used (8)	12:7	33:12,18;37:16;	95:9,16
62:23;67:14;72:10;	38:10;39:14;	varying (6)	38:8,10,12,20	womanly (1)
81:23;82:7	40:22;68:6;86:23;	26:14,18;54:3;	walls (4)	72:5
types (1)	92:1,5;93:22	58:11;89:7;91:2	12:11;41:23;	wonderful (2)
48:1	uses (5)	vegetation (6)	43:23;54:21	62:11;87:20
typical (1)	46:11;94:6,14,17,	38:19;43:24;44:7,	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	
			wants (5)	wonderfully (1) 62:11
40:20	19	18,23;84:24	55:15;68:24;72:7,	
TT	using (1)	verify (1)	11;85:14	wondering (1)
U	44:14	61:20	waste (1)	21:17
	usually (1)	vetoed (1)	41:20	words (3)
ugly (1)	17:10	19:5	water (4)	37:22;43:12;50:18
77:23	utilities (1)	vibrate (1)	45:21,22;62:25;	work (3)
unaware (3)	78:15	3:7	74:11	58:2;73:10;83:5
54:14;58:15,17	utilize (1)	vicinity (18)	way (28)	works (1)
under (9)	35:4	26:6,11,14;53:4;	6:13;10:25;11:4,	83:20
9:24;13:13;14:20;	utmost (1)	54:3,5,15;58:12;	17;15:1;16:12;21:7;	worth (1)
39:18,20;82:7,8;	86:4	67:13;90:19;91:1,2,	23:17,23;28:15;40:3,	37:22
93:13;95:5		18;92:2,3,25;95:2,5	18;45:11,11,20;47:6;	writ (2)
underlying (1)	V	Victor (3)	52:16;55:22;63:1,	31:11;69:19
46:15		29:10;83:10;89:25	20;64:4,12;71:25;	wrong (3)
understands (1)	vacant (1)	view (12)	76:12;81:5;83:20;	36:6;50:15;70:20
34:16	25:15	24:23,25;25:3,5,7,	86:7;87:2	
understood (1)	valid (1)	12;44:7,20,21;69:5;	weak (1)	Y
37:1	68:23	71:9;76:18	85:20	
unless (3)	value (1)	viewed (2)	Wednesday (2)	yards (2)
46:17;59:14;79:2	57:23	8:20;9:6	3:1,6	84:3,3
unnecessary (8)	variance (127)	viewpoint (1)	week (1)	year (7)
21:25;23:5,10;	9:17,18,25;10:10;	66:4	6:10	4:24;9:23;10:4,5;
27:12;88:25;89:14;	11:21,24;12:15;	views (12)	weeks (1)	15:9;68:1;74:9
91:20,24	13:16;18:13,19;	12:2,3;25:2,13,20,	56:23	years (4)
unusable (1)	19:14,19;20:1,9,17;	23;28:2,4;32:21,22;	Welcome (1)	10:15;54:22,25;
79:24	21:8,16,23;22:6,11,	93:14,16	3:5	77:21
unusual (1)	20;23:1,18,25;24:5,	violation (1)	welfare (4)	yes-or-no (1)
43:19	7,14;25:4,25;27:8,	71:7	27:25;28:12;	63:23
up (22)	16,23,24;28:16,20;	virtually (1)	92:22,24	7
4:6;11:15,16;	31:15;32:17;35:19;	38:23	West (9)	Z
24:17;35:1,3,7;	39:17,21,22,25;41:2,	visible (4)	3:5;5:20;7:9;8:16;	
44:17;59:5;63:3;	5;42:21,22;46:18,20;	11:7;25:16;38:18;	14:24;34:10;44:20;	ZA (7)
71:11,12;72:14;	47:10,12,24,25;48:3,	78:17	54:10;60:19	30:19;31:8;46:15,
75:11;76:14,19;	10,19,22,22,24;49:2,	visual (3)	westerly (1)	19;61:8;68:3;89:25
81:23;82:1;83:21,	5,10,10,13,20;50:12;	93:4;94:13,18	32:2	ZA-2012-1402-ZV-ZAA-ZAD-1A (1)
23;86:23;93:11	1	1	L	
25,00.25,75.11	52:17,20;53:24;	visually (1)	Westwood (1)	8:15
upheld (2)	52:17,20;53:24; 55:15,20;57:15,25;	visually (1) 35:3	Westwood (1) 86:23	8:15 Zakessian (1)

(14) trying - Zakessian

REGULAR WIEETING			1	January 13, 201
89:10	3:6	2012-111-MND (1)		6 (1)
ZA's (2)	16 (1)	5:20	4	89:21
67:16;81:18	28:1	2013 (4)	4	6:33 (2)
zip (1)	1600 (1)	18:16,22;33:19;		97:3,4
37:16	29:11		4 (7)	
		89:23	5:17;27:22;29:1;	60 (1)
zone (9)	16-foot (7)	2014 (3)	37:24;38:13,14;	38:25
28:15;31:15;	54:6,9,10,16;	3:1;89:21;90:3	94:23	61 (1)
55:10;67:12,13;	58:16,19;82:8	20-foot (1)	4:44 (1)	89:10
90:19;91:18;92:25;	17 (2)	84:7	3:2	65 (3)
95:2	28:7;33:12	21 (1)	40 (2)	39:14;44:1;53:20
zoned (2)	17,430 (1)	18:12	38:25;77:21	6th (1)
92:11,13	84:3	245 (3)	42 (2)	90:3
Zoning (21)	1700 (1)	19:1,17;69:23	51:23;78:19	
15:5;21:24;22:2;	33:11	245'ed (1)		7
39:23;42:2;46:23;	18 (4)	31:23	45(1)	
57:14,16;67:6,7,20;	45:16;75:7,16;	24th (1)	92:14	7 (1)
68:8;69:1;70:5,6;	80:14	89:19	457 (1)	19:9
78:2;83:4;88:23;	182 (1)		92:15	
		25 (1)	478 (1)	750-foot (1)
89:1,3;92:4	96:4	89:23	34:6	33:12
4	1875 (1)	255 (1)	480 (1)	794 (1)
1	29:11	92:12	92:13	89:11
	18th (1)	25th (1)	490 (1)	
1 (5)	7:10	19:22	34:7	8
37:24,24;68:10;	1972 (1)	28 (1)	494,000 (1)	
91:10;92:19	89:11	89:11	84:3	80,000 (1)
10 (1)	1986 (1)	28th (3)	494.30 (1)	61:15
37:24	96:4	7:4,13,14		82 (1)
10338 (1)	1993 (1)	711,10,11	34:12	54:12
67:4	83:16	3	4th (3)	54.12
10550 (3)	1995 (1)		4:24;5:1;89:10	9
		2 (2)	_	9
8:16;31:21;37:2	92:13	3 (3)	5	0 (1)
10-foot (2)	19th (7)	8:14;27:7;67:10		9 (1)
10:12;84:24	7:11,19,20,21,22,	30 (4)	5 (1)	18:16
11 (1)	23;8:1	61:19;79:24;84:7;	29:1	90067 (1)
19:17	1st (1)	87:1	50 (11)	29:12
1145 (1)	20:1	300 (1)	9:20;11:6,9;25:17;	9034 (1)
96:4		71:19	39:9,11;48:16;	60:18
1168 (1)	2	30-foot (1)	54:11;57:1;81:13,14	91326 (1)
89:10		84:8	50- (1)	67:5
11965 (1)	2 (2)	33 (1)		
5:20	4:16;77:25	38:15	53:18	
11966 (1)	2,936 (1)	333 (2)	50-foot (1)	
7:9		48:14;52:7	84:8	
	84:4		50-foot-built (1)	
12,000 (1)	2.1 (1)	35 (2)	67:10	
61:17	61:15	47:5;61:19	50-plus (1)	
12.27-D (1)	20 (2)	36 (9)	75:17	
88:21	33:12;80:14	9:20;25:17;39:10;	53 (1)	
1209 (1)	200,000 (1)	45:17;54:13;74:3;	89:23	
69:14	51:24	80:15;84:7;87:1	540 (1)	
12 (1)	2000 (3)	360 (16)	92:11	
13 (2)			/ 4.1 1	
89:7,19	74:7,8,9	13:8;14:19;15:4;	55 (9)	
89:7,19	74:7,8,9		55 (9) 37:12:38:11:	
89:7,19 1-3.3 (2)	74:7,8,9 2003 (1)	31:10,20;32:24;	37:12;38:11;	
89:7,19 1-3.3 (2) 25:1;93:13	74:7,8,9 2003 (1) 92:15	31:10,20;32:24; 35:14;37:2,5;40:3,4;	37:12;38:11; 56:25;72:8,9,16;	
89:7,19 1-3.3 (2) 25:1;93:13 15 (3)	74:7,8,9 2003 (1) 92:15 2005 (1)	31:10,20;32:24; 35:14;37:2,5;40:3,4; 55:24;57:22;67:22;	37:12;38:11; 56:25;72:8,9,16; 75:7,10;92:16	
89:7,19 1-3.3 (2) 25:1;93:13 15 (3) 3:1;48:15;61:17	74:7,8,9 2003 (1) 92:15 2005 (1) 74:9	31:10,20;32:24; 35:14;37:2,5;40:3,4; 55:24;57:22;67:22; 71:20;78:3	37:12;38:11; 56:25;72:8,9,16; 75:7,10;92:16 55-foot (1)	
89:7,19 1-3.3 (2) 25:1;93:13 15 (3) 3:1;48:15;61:17 1527 (1)	74:7,8,9 2003 (1) 92:15 2005 (1) 74:9 2005-8611-MND-REC2 (1)	31:10,20;32:24; 35:14;37:2,5;40:3,4; 55:24;57:22;67:22; 71:20;78:3 36-foot (1)	37:12;38:11; 56:25;72:8,9,16; 75:7,10;92:16 55-foot (1) 53:18	
89:7,19 1-3.3 (2) 25:1;93:13 15 (3) 3:1;48:15;61:17 1527 (1) 75:24	74:7,8,9 2003 (1) 92:15 2005 (1) 74:9 2005-8611-MND-REC2 (1) 8:16	31:10,20;32:24; 35:14;37:2,5;40:3,4; 55:24;57:22;67:22; 71:20;78:3 36-foot (1) 83:22	37:12;38:11; 56:25;72:8,9,16; 75:7,10;92:16 55-foot (1)	
89:7,19 1-3.3 (2) 25:1;93:13 15 (3) 3:1;48:15;61:17 1527 (1) 75:24 1535 (1)	74:7,8,9 2003 (1) 92:15 2005 (1) 74:9 2005-8611-MND-REC2 (1) 8:16 2006 (2)	31:10,20;32:24; 35:14;37:2,5;40:3,4; 55:24;57:22;67:22; 71:20;78:3 36-foot (1) 83:22 39 (1)	37:12;38:11; 56:25;72:8,9,16; 75:7,10;92:16 55-foot (1) 53:18	
1-3.3 (2) 25:1;93:13 15 (3) 3:1;48:15;61:17 1527 (1) 75:24 1535 (1) 77:19	74:7,8,9 2003 (1) 92:15 2005 (1) 74:9 2005-8611-MND-REC2 (1) 8:16 2006 (2) 30:25;86:14	31:10,20;32:24; 35:14;37:2,5;40:3,4; 55:24;57:22;67:22; 71:20;78:3 36-foot (1) 83:22 39 (1) 38:25	37:12;38:11; 56:25;72:8,9,16; 75:7,10;92:16 55-foot (1) 53:18 55-foot-imposed (1)	
89:7,19 1-3.3 (2) 25:1;93:13 15 (3) 3:1;48:15;61:17 1527 (1) 75:24 1535 (1) 77:19 15-foot (4)	74:7,8,9 2003 (1) 92:15 2005 (1) 74:9 2005-8611-MND-REC2 (1) 8:16 2006 (2) 30:25;86:14 2008 (1)	31:10,20;32:24; 35:14;37:2,5;40:3,4; 55:24;57:22;67:22; 71:20;78:3 36-foot (1) 83:22 39 (1) 38:25 3rd (2)	37:12;38:11; 56:25;72:8,9,16; 75:7,10;92:16 55-foot (1) 53:18 55-foot-imposed (1) 43:25 5th (2)	
89:7,19 1-3.3 (2) 25:1;93:13 15 (3) 3:1;48:15;61:17 1527 (1) 75:24 1535 (1) 77:19	74:7,8,9 2003 (1) 92:15 2005 (1) 74:9 2005-8611-MND-REC2 (1) 8:16 2006 (2) 30:25;86:14	31:10,20;32:24; 35:14;37:2,5;40:3,4; 55:24;57:22;67:22; 71:20;78:3 36-foot (1) 83:22 39 (1) 38:25	37:12;38:11; 56:25;72:8,9,16; 75:7,10;92:16 55-foot (1) 53:18 55-foot-imposed (1) 43:25	
89:7,19 1-3.3 (2) 25:1;93:13 15 (3) 3:1;48:15;61:17 1527 (1) 75:24 1535 (1) 77:19 15-foot (4)	74:7,8,9 2003 (1) 92:15 2005 (1) 74:9 2005-8611-MND-REC2 (1) 8:16 2006 (2) 30:25;86:14 2008 (1)	31:10,20;32:24; 35:14;37:2,5;40:3,4; 55:24;57:22;67:22; 71:20;78:3 36-foot (1) 83:22 39 (1) 38:25 3rd (2)	37:12;38:11; 56:25;72:8,9,16; 75:7,10;92:16 55-foot (1) 53:18 55-foot-imposed (1) 43:25 5th (2)	