



**CITY OF WEST COVINA**

**PLANNING COMMISSION**

**MARCH 23, 2021, 7:00 PM  
REGULAR MEETING**

**CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
1444 W. GARVEY AVENUE SOUTH  
WEST COVINA, CALIFORNIA 91790**

**Sheena Heng, Chair  
Livier Becerra, Vice Chair  
Brian Gutierrez, Commissioner  
Shelby Williams, Commissioner  
Nickolas Lewis, Commissioner**

On March 4, 2020, Governor Newsom proclaimed a State of Emergency in California as a result of the threat of COVID-19. On March 17, 2020, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-29-20, suspending certain requirements of the Brown Act relating to the conduct of public meetings. Pursuant to the Executive Orders, Planning Commissioners may attend Planning Commission meetings telephonically and the Planning Commission is not required to make available a physical location from which members of the public may observe the meeting and offer public comment.

On June 18, 2020, the California Department of Public Health issued guidance mandating that people in California wear cloth face coverings in specified circumstances, including when they are inside, or in line to enter, any indoor public space

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 emergency and pursuant to State and County public health directives, the City Council Chambers will have limited seating available on a first-come, first-served basis for members of the public to attend and participate in the Planning Commission meeting in person. All persons attending the meeting are required to wear cloth face coverings and observe social distancing protocols. Members of the public may also watch Planning Commission the meeting live on the City's website at: <https://www.westcovina.org/departments/city-clerk/agendas-and-meetings/current-meetings-and-agendas> under the "Watch Live" tab or through the West Covina City YouTube channel at [www.westcovina.org/LIVE](https://www.westcovina.org/LIVE).

If you are experiencing symptoms such as fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, or sore throat, the City requests that you participate in the meeting from home by watching the meeting live via the links set forth above.

***REMOTE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:***

In lieu of attending the meeting in person, members of the public can submit public comments via email or address the Planning Commission by telephone using the methods described below.

***EMAILED PUBLIC COMMENT:***

Members of the public can submit public comments to the City Clerk via e-mail at [City\\_Clerk@westcovina.org](mailto:City_Clerk@westcovina.org). The subject line should specify “Oral Communications – 3/23/2021”. Please include your full name and address in your e-mail. All emails received by 5:00 P.M. on the day of the Commission meeting will be posted to the City’s website under “Current Meetings and Agendas” and provided to the Planning Commission prior to the meeting. No comments will be read out loud during the meeting. All comments received by the start of the meeting will be made part of the official public record of the meeting.

***TELEPHONIC ACCESSIBILITY***

Members of the public that wish to address the Commission by telephone during Oral Communications or a public hearing may contact the City Clerk by email [City\\_Clerk@westcovina.org](mailto:City_Clerk@westcovina.org) or by telephone (626) 939-8433 by 5:30 P.M. on the day of the Commission meeting for instructions regarding addressing the Planning Commission by telephone during the meeting.

***Please turn off all cell phones and other electronic devices prior to entering the Council Chambers***

***AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT***

The City complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If you need special assistance at Planning Commission meetings, please call (626) 939-8433 (voice) or (626) 960-4422 (TTY) from 8 to 5 Monday through Thursday. Do call at least one day prior to the meeting date to inform us of your particular needs and to determine if accommodation is possible. For sign language interpreter services at Planning Commission meetings, please request no less than four working days prior to the meeting.

***PUBLIC COMMENTS/ADDRESSING THE COMMISSION***

Any person wishing to address the Planning Commission on any matter listed on the agenda or on any other matter within their jurisdiction is asked to complete a speaker card that is provided on the speaker podium and submit the card to a Planning Department staff member.

***Please identify on the speaker card whether you are speaking on an agenda item or non-agenda item.***

Requests to speak on non-agenda items will be heard during “Oral Communications” before the Public Hearing section of the agenda. Oral Communications are limited to thirty (30) minutes. Generally, comments are limited to five minutes per speaker unless further time is granted by the Chairperson. ***The Chairperson may also, at his or her discretion, further limit the time of each speaker in order to accommodate a large number of speakers and/or to ensure that the business of the Planning Commission is effectively conducted.***

Any testimony or comments regarding a matter set for Public Hearing will be heard during the public hearing for that item.

***MOMENT OF SILENT PRAYER/MEDITATION***

***PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE***

***ROLL CALL***

***APPROVAL OF MINUTES***

1. Regular meeting, March 9, 2021

## **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

This is the time when any member of the public may speak to the Commission on any matter within the scope of duties assigned to the Commission relating to non-agendized or consent calendar items. Other matters included on this agenda may be addressed when that item is under consideration. For all oral communications, the chairperson may impose reasonable limitations on public comments to assure an orderly and timely meeting. The Ralph M. Brown Act limits the Planning Commission and staff's ability to respond to public comments at this meeting. Thus, your comments may be agendized for a future meeting or referred to staff. The Commission may ask questions for clarification, if desired, at this time.

By policy of the Commission, Oral Communications at this time on the agenda is limited to a total of 15 minutes. Persons who are not afforded the opportunity to speak at this time may do so under "Continuation of Oral Communications" later on the agenda.

## **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

2. **PRECISE PLAN NO. 20-01**  
**TENTATIVE TRACT MAP 83134 (20-01)**  
**ZONE CHANGE NO. 20-02**  
**GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT NO. 20-01**  
**TREE REMOVAL PERMIT NO. 20-14**  
**MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**  
**APPLICANT: Glen Crosby for Lewis Land Developers**  
**LOCATION: 1651 E. Rowland Avenue (AIN: 8442-018-900)**  
**REQUEST: The project consists of a request for the approval of a precise plan and tentative tract map to demolish all existing school buildings/uses on the site and construct 158 residential condominium units (66 two-story single-family residential style detached units: ranging from 1,471 sq. ft. to 1,798 sq. ft. and 92 attached three-story townhome style units: ranging from 1,310 sq. ft. to 1,721 sq. ft.), internal drive aisles, common open space, guest parking spaces, and other associated incidental improvements on a 9.14 acre site. A tree removal permit is required to remove 9 significant trees on the site (5 Oak trees, 2 Maple trees, and 2 Bottle Brush trees). The project also involves a request for a General Plan Amendment to change the general plan land-use designation from Civic: Schools to Neighborhood Medium, and a Zone Change to change the zoning from Single-Family Residential (R-1) to a Specific Plan.**

**NON-HEARING ITEMS - None**

***TEN-DAY APPEAL PERIOD: Actions taken by the Planning Commission that are not recommendations to the City Council will become final after ten (10) calendar days unless a written appeal with the appropriate fee is lodged with the City Clerk's Office before close of business on the tenth day.***

## **COMMISSION REPORTS/COMMENTS AND MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS**

This is the time when any member of the Commission may bring a matter to the attention of the full Commission that is within the scope of duties assigned to the Commission. Any item that was considered during the Agenda is not appropriate for discussion in this section of the agenda. **NO COMMISSION DISCUSSION OR ACTION CAN BE CONSIDERED AT THIS TIME.** If the Commission desires to discuss

an issue raised by a speaker or take an action, the Commission may vote to agendaize the matter for a future meeting.

3. **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

- a. Forthcoming - April 13, 2021

4. **CITY COUNCIL ACTION:**

This is an oral presentation of City Council matters and actions, which are in the Commission's area of interest

**ADJOURNMENT**

# A G E N D A

**ITEM NO. 1.**

**DATE: 03/23/2021**

**TO:** Planning Commission  
**FROM:** Planning Division  
**SUBJECT:** Regular meeting, March 9, 2021

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## **Attachments**

Minutes 3.9.21

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**PLANNING DEPARTMENT STAFF REPORT**

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**SUBJECT**

**PRECISE PLAN NO. 20-01**

**TENTATIVE TRACT MAP 83134 (20-01)**

**ZONE CHANGE NO. 20-02**

**GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT NO. 20-01**

**TREE REMOVAL PERMIT NO. 20-14**

**MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

**APPLICANT: Glen Crosby for Lewis Land Developers**

**LOCATION: 1651 E. Rowland Avenue (AIN: 8442-018-900)**

**REQUEST:** The project consists of a request for the approval of a precise plan and tentative tract map to demolish all existing school buildings/uses on the site and construct 158 residential condominium units (66 two-story single-family residential style detached units: ranging from 1,471 sq. ft. to 1,798 sq. ft. and 92 attached three-story townhome style units: ranging from 1,310 sq. ft. to 1,721 sq. ft.), internal drive aisles, common open space, guest parking spaces, and other associated incidental improvements on a 9.14 acre site. A tree removal permit is required to remove 9 significant trees on the site (5 Oak trees, 2 Maple trees, and 2 Bottle Brush trees). The project also involves a request for a General Plan Amendment to change the general plan land-use designation from Civic: Schools to Neighborhood Medium, and a Zone Change to change the zoning from Single-Family Residential (R-1) to a Specific Plan.

**BACKGROUND**

The project was initially reviewed by the Planning Commission on March 9, 2021. During the public hearing 16 individuals spoke in opposition of the project with concerns regarding the proposed use, density, architecture, parking, lack of public parks in the area, drainage, traffic, and desire for additional community meetings led by the applicant. A representative of the Covina Valley Unified School District spoke in support of the project. The Planning Commission continued the item to March 23, 2021 with direction to the applicant to reach out to concerned neighbors. During the Planning Commission discussion, the Planning Commission expressed concerns regarding the Down Payment Assistance Program, the height of the perimeter walls, and the need for supplementary landscape buffer/screening along Eileen Street and along Rowland (to screen the proposed parking area).

**DISCUSSION**

The applicant (Glen Crosby) stated he has reached out to the neighbors in attendance at the March 9, 2021 Planning Commission Meeting who provided him their contact information.

To address the Planning Commissions concerns, staff has made the following revisions to the Precise Plan Resolution No. 20-6068 Conditions of Approval (COA):

- COA No. 7 - This COA has been revised to require a 7'-0" tall (minimum height) block wall with landscape buffering/screening required to be installed in front of the wall in the form of shrubs, trees, and/or vines.
- COA No. 18 - This COA has been revised to require a 7'-0" tall (minimum height) block wall along the east, west, and north property lines to preserve the privacy of adjacent neighbors and to discourage individuals from climbing the wall.
- COA No. 36 - The Down Payment Assistance Program has been renamed Homeownership Assistance Program and has been revised to be made available only to low- or moderate-income

individuals/families.

## REQUIRED FINDINGS

Findings are required to allow the Planning Commission to approve the precise plan and tentative tract map. Findings are required to be made for each of these individual entitlements. The findings for entitlements are included in each individual resolution (Attachment Nos. 1 and 2) and are also presented below.

Findings necessary for the approval of a **Precise Plan** are as follows:

***a. The proposed development plans and the uses proposed are consistent with the General Plan and any applicable specific plan.***

An amendment to the City's General Plan land-use map to change the designation of the project site from Civic: School to Neighborhood Medium (9 to 20 units/acre), would be required in order to develop the site. The proposed project density will be 17.29 units per acre. The proposed General Plan designation of Neighborhood Medium allows a maximum density of 20 units per acre.

The proposed project is consistent with the following General Plan Policies and Actions:

P2.1 Maintain and enhance the City's current tax base.

P2.6 Create a diversity of housing options.

P3.3 New growth will complete, enhance, and reinforce the form and character of the unique West Covina neighborhoods, districts, and corridors.

The proposed project is consistent with the following Housing Element Goals:

Goal 1 Maintain and enhance the quality of existing housing and residential neighborhoods in West Covina.

Goal 2 Provide a variety of housing types to accommodate all economic segments of the City.

Goal 4 Promote equal housing opportunity for all residents

Goal 5 Identify adequate sites to achieve housing variety.

***b. The proposed development is consistent with adopted development standards for the zone and complies with all other applicable provisions of the Municipal Code.***

The project site is currently developed with a school use and zoned as Single-Family Residential (R-1). The project involves changing the zoning of the project site from Single-Family Residential (R-1) to a Specific Plan to allow the construction of a 158 multiple-family residential development. The West Covina Municipal Code allows for the creation of a specific plan zone in order to provide greater specificity and flexibility in carrying out the general plan of the city. In addition, Title 7, Division 1, Chapter 3, Article 8 of the California Government Code grants municipalities the ability to adopt specific plans. As designed, the project will be consistent with the standards set forth in the proposed Walnut Grove Specific Plan.

***c. Granting the permit would not be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, and welfare and would not unreasonably interfere with the use or enjoyment of property in the vicinity of the subject property.***

The project is designed to be compatible with the structures and uses within the vicinity and would not be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, and general welfare and would not unreasonably interfere with

the use and enjoyment of property. The project is designed as an excellent transition bridging the commercial uses to the east, south, and north, and single-family residential uses to the north, west, and south, with two-story single-family residential style homes adjacent to neighboring single-family residential uses, and the three-story attached multifamily residential townhouse style development adjacent to commercial uses. In addition, landscaping will be installed to provide a buffer separating the proposed structures from the neighboring residential uses.

***d. The site is physically suitable for the type, density and intensity of the development being proposed, including vehicle access and circulation, utilities, and the absence of physical constraints.***

The proposed development will be accessible from two driveways along Rowland Avenue. The site is 9.14 acres and, as conditioned, is physically suitable for the proposed project and adequate to accommodate the size and shape of the building, parking and all required standards of the proposed Specific Plan subject to the approval of the Zone Change and General Plan amendment. The proposed General Plan designation of Neighborhood Medium allows a maximum density of 20 units per acre. The proposed project density will be below the maximum 20 units per acre at 17.29 units per acre.

***e. The architecture, site layout, location, shape, bulk and physical characteristics of the proposed development are compatible with the existing and future land uses, and do not interfere with orderly development in the vicinity.***

All aspects of the site development are compatible with the existing and future land uses and do not interfere with orderly development in the vicinity. All site improvements and proposed landscaping will enhance the overall appearance of the streetscape. The design of the buildings proposed will utilize one of three architectural styles: Farmhouse, Spanish Colonial, and Cottage. All proposed architectural styles utilize a mixture of materials that are appropriate for the selected style/design and are compatible with the neighborhood.

Findings necessary for the approval of a **Tentative Tract Map** are as follows:

***a. The proposed map is consistent with the general plan and any applicable adopted specific plans.***

An amendment to the City's General Plan land-use map to change the designation of the project site from Civic: School to Neighborhood Medium (9 to 20 units/acre), would be required in order to develop the site. The proposed project density will be 17.29 units per acre. The proposed General Plan designation of Neighborhood Medium allows a maximum density of 20 units per acre.

The proposed project is consistent with the following General Plan Policies and Actions:

P2.1 Maintain and enhance the City's current tax base.

P2.6 Create a diversity of housing options.

P3.3 New growth will complete, enhance, and reinforce the form and character of the unique West Covina neighborhoods, districts, and corridors.

The proposed project is consistent with the following Housing Element Goals:

Goal 1 Maintain and enhance the quality of existing housing and residential neighborhoods in West Covina.

Goal 2 Provide a variety of housing types to accommodate all economic segments of the City.

Goal 4 Promote equal housing opportunity for all residents



Goal 5 Identify adequate sites to achieve housing variety.

***b. The design or improvement of the proposed subdivision is consistent with the general plan and applicable adopted specific plans.***

The design and improvements of the proposed subdivision and precise plan is consistent with the General Plan in that the proposed condominium subdivision is compatible with single-family residential and commercial uses in the vicinity. The project involves changing the zoning of the project site from Single-Family Residential (R-1) to a Specific Plan to allow the construction of a 158 multiple-family residential development. The West Covina Municipal Code allows for the creation of a specific plan zone in order to provide greater specificity and flexibility in carrying out the general plan of the city. As designed, the project is consistent with the proposed Walnut Grove Specific Plan.

***c. The site is physically suitable for the type of development.***

The site consists of a 9.14-acre lot surrounded by residential uses to the east, north, and south, and commercial uses to the north, east, and south. Adequate provisions have been incorporated into the design to accommodate the required development standards as specified in proposed Specific Plan. The site has access from Rowland Avenue.

***d. The site is physically suitable for the proposed density of development.***

The proposed development will be accessible from two driveways along Rowland Avenue. The site is 9.14 acres and, as conditioned, is physically suitable for the proposed project and adequate to accommodate the size and shape of the building, parking and all required standards of the proposed Specific Plan subject to the approval of the Zone Change and General Plan amendment. The proposed General Plan designation of Neighborhood Medium allows a maximum density of 20 units per acre. The proposed project density will be 17.29 units per acre. Additionally, there is a condition that requires that CC&Rs are recorded as a part of this project to ensure orderly operation. The site will be developed in accordance with the grading and construction requirements of the West Covina Municipal Code and the City Engineer.

***e. The design of the subdivision or the proposed improvements are not likely to cause substantial environmental damage or substantially and avoidably injure fish, wildlife or their habitat.***

The site consists of a 9.14-acre parcel developed with a school campus. No known endangered, threatened or rare species or habitats, or designated natural communities, wetlands habitat, or wildlife dispersal, or migration corridors are present on site. A mitigated negative declaration was prepared for the project, which included required mitigation measures for Aesthetics, Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Energy, Geology and Soils, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Noise, Public Services, Transportation, Tribal Cultural Resources, and Utilities and Service Systems, to ensure that the project will not cause substantial environmental damage or injure fish, wildlife, or their habitat.

***f. Neither the design of the subdivision nor the type of improvements are likely to cause serious public health problems.***

The proposed map and improvements will have access to a public sanitary sewer system for the removal and disposal of wastewater and to other necessary utility services. The site will be developed in accordance with the standards of the Engineering Division, the Municipal Code, the Uniform Building Code, and other applicable requirements.

***g. The design of the subdivision or the type of improvements will either (i) not conflict with recorded or adjudged easements, acquired by the public at large, for access through or use of, property within the proposed subdivision; or (ii) alternate easements, for access or for use, will be provided, and these will be substantially equivalent to ones previously acquired by the public.***

There are no easements on the property that would be affected by implementation of the proposed project. Access to the site will be provided via Rowland Avenue.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION**

The Mitigated Negative Declaration of Environmental Impact (MND) prepared for the project disclosed that the project will not have a significant impact on the environment. Studies were completed for Air Quality, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Noise and Vibration and Traffic. Mitigation measures have been incorporated into the projects design reduce impacts on the environment to a less than significant level. The MND has been prepared pursuant to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970, as amended, and was circulated for public comment for 30 days (from November 19, 2020 to December 21, 2020). The City received two comments from public agencies (Department of Transportation and Los Angeles County Sanitation District) and comments from concerned individuals. Responses to comments have been prepared for all letters received during the public comment period. In addition, responses to comments were also prepared for all letters received in response to the public hearing notice up to February 24, 2021. Letters received from neighbors from February 24, 2021 - March 3, 2021 have been compiled and are included in the Planning Commission packet along with the responses to comments (Attachment No. 7). Letters received from March 4, 2021 through March 16, 2021 are included in this report as Attachment No. 6. Any letters received after March 16, 2021 will be provided to the Planning Commission separately prior to the March 23, 2021 meeting.

## **Required Mitigations**

The environmental study concludes that mitigation measures are required for Aesthetics, Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Energy, Geology and Soils, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Noise, Public Services, Transportation, Tribal Cultural Resources, and Utilities and Service Systems. A Mitigation Monitoring Program is an exhibit of Attachment No. 5 and provides information on the mitigation measures and monitoring by responsible agencies.

## **STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS**

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission adopt Resolutions Nos. 21-6068, 21-6069, 21-6070, 21-6071, 21-6072, recommending that the City Council adopt Precise Plan No. 20-01, Tree Removal Permit No. 20-14, Tentative Tract Map No. 83134, General Plan Amendment No. 20-01, and Zone Change No. 20-02, and Certify the Mitigated Negative Declaration, respectively.

## **LARGE ATTACHMENTS**

A copy of the plans, proposed Specific Plan, and Mitigated Negative Declaration of Environmental Impact is posted on the City website at <https://www.westcovina.org/departments/community-development/planning-division/projects-and-environmental-documents>

**Submitted by:** Jo-Anne Burns, Planning Manager

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## **Attachments**

Attachment No. 1 - Precise Plan Resolution  
Attachment No. 2 - Tentative Tract Map Resolution  
Attachment No. 3 - General Plan Amendment Resolution  
Attachment No. 4 - Zone Change Resolution  
Attachment No. 5 - Mitigated Negative Declaration Resolution  
Attachment No. 6 - Letters Received from 3/4/2021 through 3/16/2021  
Attachment No. 7 - Responses to Comments and Letters from Neighbors  
Attachment No. 8 - March 9, 2021 Staff Report

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*City of West Covina*

*Memorandum*

# A G E N D A

**ITEM NO. 3.a.**

**DATE: 03/23/2021**

**TO:** Planning Commission  
**FROM:** Planning Division  
**SUBJECT:** Forthcoming - April 13, 2021

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**Submitted by:**

## **Attachments**

Forthcoming 3.23.21

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