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**DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

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DATE: September 6, 2007

APPLICANT: Zev Beckerman  
27862 Blythdale Road  
Agoura Hills, CA 91301

TO: Planning Commission

CASE NO.: 07-SPR-003

LOCATION: 27862 Blythdale Road (A.P.N. 2055-024-004)

REQUEST: Request for approval of a Site Plan/Architectural Review to construct a 3,340 square-foot, one-story, single-family residence.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION: Categorically exempt from CEQA per Section 15303 (New Construction of a Single-Family Residence)

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends the Planning Commission adopt a motion to approve Site Plan/Architectural Review Case No. 07-SPR-003, subject to conditions, based on the findings of the attached Draft Resolutions.

ZONING DESIGNATION: RV-OA (Very Low Density Residential – Old Agoura Design Overlay)

GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION: RV – (Very Low Density Residential)

**I. PROJECT BACKGROUND AND DESCRIPTION**

The applicant, Zev Beckerman, is requesting approval of a Site Plan/Architectural Review to construct a 3,340 square foot, single-story, single-family residence to replace the original home that was recently demolished. The applicant is also proposing to construct 391 square feet of attached covered patio area. The lot has an existing

swimming pool, detached garage, fencing, driveway and horse keeping area that are proposed to be retained. The subject parcel is located at 27862 Blythedale Road in the Very Low Density Residential (RV) zone and Old Agoura Design Overlay (OA) zone.

The applicant received administrative approval in June of 2006 to add 665 square feet to their existing 2,223 square foot, single-story residence. During construction, the builder demolished the entire frame of the residence and thus no longer qualifies for an administrative review but must now be considered as a new residence, subject to Planning Commission approval. Accordingly, the applicant has applied for a Site Plan/Architectural Review application for the Planning Commission's consideration.

The proposed residence is a permitted use in the Very Low Density Residential (RV) zone and will meet the required development standards, relative to lot coverage, setbacks, and height. Listed below are the proposed development data pertaining to the project:

Pertinent Data

	<u>Proposed</u>	<u>Required/ Allowed</u>
1. Lot Size	1.04 acres (45,302 sq. ft.)	1 acre min. (43,560 sq. ft.)
2. Bldg. Height	22 feet	35 feet max.
3. Building Size		
a. Residence	3,340 sq. ft.	N/A
b. Garage	<u>520 sq. ft. (existing)</u>	N/A
Total	3,860 sq. ft.	N/A
4. Setbacks		
a. Front (north)	130 feet	25 ft. min.
b. Rear (south)	222 feet	25 ft. min.
c. East Side	29 feet	12 ft. min.
d. West Side	45 feet	12 ft. min.
5. Lot Coverage		
a. Building Footprint	3,340 sq. ft.	
b. Detached Garage	520 sq. ft.	

c.	Swimming Pool	608 sq. ft.	
d.	Attached Covered Patios	410 sq. ft.	
e.	<u>Hardscape</u>	<u>2,392 sq. ft.</u>	
	Total	7,270 sq. ft. (16%)	11,326 sq. ft. (25%)
6.	No. of Oak Trees	1 (Offsite)	N/A
7.	Average Slope	Less than 10%	N/A

**II. STAFF ANALYSIS**

Site Plan:

The single-story residence is proposed to be built in the same location as the former residence and on the existing foundation. The proposed 3,340 square foot residence is 452 square feet larger in size than what was administratively approved, and 1,117 square feet larger in size than the original size of the residence. The total proposed lot coverage for this project is 16% (7,270 square feet) of the parcel and will be under the 25% maximum allowed for the zone. The existing conditions provide a 130-foot front yard setback (to remain) and a 228 square foot rear yard setback. A 29-foot setback on the east side of the property (to remain) and a 50-foot setback on the west side of the property. The proposed project will provide a setback of 45 feet (5 feet less than previously existed) to the west property line and 222 feet rear (5 feet less than previously existed) to the south property line. As proposed, the project meets the minimum setback requirements of the RV zone.

The proposed residence will have the same finish floor elevation as the former residence, at the 100-foot elevation, which is approximately 8 feet above the average street elevation of Blythdale Road. The lot is relatively flat and the yard currently slopes down toward the street in the front of the property. The house is to be accessed from Blythdale Road (a private road) by an existing 15 foot wide driveway (minimum width required by the Los Angeles Fire Department) that is circular in design within the front yard and extends further along the west property line and terminates at the garage.

An existing five (5) foot high, white three-rail fence that currently surrounds the property is proposed to remain on the side and rear property lines. A new 3.5 foot high stucco finish wall, with 2.5 feet high of wrought iron on top, stone posts and black wrought iron gates, not to exceed 6 feet in height, are proposed to be constructed along the front north property line. Also, a new three-foot high stucco finish wall and posts are proposed to be constructed at the top of the driveway.

Architectural Design:

In an effort to preserve the semi-rural character of the community the applicant has chosen to use natural materials and earth tone colors. The applicant has chosen beige colored stucco and stone on the exterior walls of the building with a dark brown color for the trim and clad windows and ledges. A dark brown stained, wooden front door with glass is proposed. The roofing material proposed on the new residence, attached covered patios, and existing garage will consist of terracotta colored clay tiles. The residence will have one chimney which will be clad in beige colored stucco. The entry and middle portion of the roof of the residence will be raised to provide ceiling height and light with clerestory windows. The applicant is proposing patios and walkways of decorative stone. The applicant changed their original proposal to construct a flat roof design above the existing garage to a full roof design as recommended by staff for greater compatibility with the residence. Similar materials and colors to match the proposing residence will be used for this existing detached garage.

The Architectural Review Panel (ARP) comments addressing the originally proposed plans stated that the residence was not very rural in character and suggested that natural materials such as stone be added; a sense of identity be created for the entrance; more detail be incorporated around the windows for greater articulation on the building elevations; a decorative door be added; redesign the roof; widen the chimney as it was too narrow; and consider providing entry lights, gates or pylons at the front of the property. The applicant redesigned the residence to include the Panel suggestions and submitted new plans. The Architectural Review Panel reviewed the revised plans and found that the design of the residence met the design standards of the Old Agoura Design Overlay District and the City's Architectural Design Guidelines, but recommended that the arch window on the west elevation have a transom dividing the window horizontally at the top portion of the window, and the garage exterior walls and roof match the materials and colors of the new residence. The applicant elected not to change the arch window on the west elevation.

The Old Agoura Homeowners Association has reviewed the project. A copy of their letter is attached to the report for the Commission's review.

The overall height of the residence is proposed at 22 feet high, 9 feet higher than the original house (to allow for a higher ceiling in the entry area and living room to accommodate clerestory windows), and meets the maximum 35 foot height allowed for a residence in the RV zone. Existing landscaping will screen most of the proposed residence and a new landscape plan is not required for this previously developed flat lot.

In an effort to evaluate the compatibility of the proposed size of the home with other Old Agoura properties, a survey of 21 neighboring developed lots was conducted. The results revealed an average lot size of 50,076 square feet and an average dwelling unit size of 3,413 square feet (excluding the garages), resulting in an average floor/area ratio of 0.07. The survey included three Planning Commission approved custom homes on Blythdale Road

of 3,662, 4,370, and 7,113 square feet in size. The applicant is proposing a house size of 3,340 square feet on a 45,302 square-foot (1.04 acre) lot, which results in a floor/area ratio of 0.07. The proposal is 73 square feet below the neighborhood average.

Engineering/Public Works:

The Public Works and Engineering Department has reviewed the proposed development application and will require minor street improvements along the property's Blythdale Road frontage. These improvements will also include a minimum street width of 20 feet, including 3 foot inverted shoulder, which will satisfy the Los Angeles County Fire Department's requirement. The improvements shall be continued from 27918 Blythdale Road to east the east property line of the subject property. Final street plans and drainage plans will be subject to approval by the City Engineer prior to issuance of a building permit.

A private septic system currently serves the property. The septic tank is located between the residence and the existing detached garage. The septic system was recently replaced with an improved septic system that is of sufficient size and condition to serve the new residence.

Oak Tree Review:

There are no Oak trees on site; however, there is one very large Oak tree located on the adjacent property to the west that overhangs the subject site at the northwest corner of the lot. Impacts are limited to incidental construction access that is necessary in order to construct a home at the subject site, but no trimming or grading encroachment is proposed at this time. The City Oak Tree/Landscape Consultant requires that the tree be fenced prior to the start of any work and determined that the health of the tree will not be significantly impacted with the recommended conditions of project approval.

Environmental Review:

Based upon review of this project by the City Environmental Analyst, no significant environmental impacts have been identified for construction of the project. The project has been determined to be Categorically Exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act per Section 15303. This exemption includes, but is not limited to, the construction of a single-family residence. A copy of the notice of exemption prepared by the City Environmental Analyst regarding the project is attached.

**III. RECOMMENDATION**

Based on the foregoing analysis, staff recommends that the Planning Commission adopt a motion to approve Site Plan/Architectural Review, Case No. 07-SPR-003, subject to conditions, based on the findings of the attached draft Resolution.

#### **IV. ATTACHMENTS**

- Draft Resolution and Conditions of Approval
- Exhibit A: Vicinity Map
- Exhibit B: Square Footage Analysis Map and Table
- Exhibit C: Reduced Copies of Plans
- Exhibit D: Environmental Determination
- Exhibit E: Letter from Old Agoura Homeowners Association
- Exhibit F: Photographs of Site
- Exhibit G: Colored Elevations of Residence

**CASE PLANNER:** Renee Madrigal, Assistant Planner