



**CITY OF SOUTH PASADENA
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD**

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2021 AT 6:30 P.M.

VIA ZOOM

CALL TO ORDER:

The Regular Meeting of the South Pasadena Design Review Board was called to order by on Thursday, February 4, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. The meeting was conducted remotely by video conference pursuant to the Executive Order N-29-20 issued by Governor Newsom. The Council Chambers were closed; Members of the public attended the meeting via ZOOM.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT:

Joe Carlson, Board Member
Kay Younger, Board Member
Melissa Hon Tsai, Board Member
Samantha Hill, Vice-Chair
Mark Smeaton, Chair

COUNCIL LIAISON

PRESENT:

Diana Mahmud, Mayor, Council Liaison

STAFF

PRESENT:

Kanika Kith, Planning Manager
Malinda Lim, Associate Planner
Lisa Krause, Contract Planner
Veronica Ortiz-De Anda, Contract Planner
Aneli Gonzalez, Planning Intern

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Majority vote of the Board to proceed with Board business.

There were no changes requested and the Agenda was approved as submitted.

DISCLOSURE OF SITE VISITS AND EX-PARTE CONTACTS

Disclosure by Board of site visits and ex-parte contact for items on the agenda.

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Public Comment – General (Non-Agenda Items)

None.

BUSINESS ITEM

1. Design Review Board Reorganization

Recommendation

Select a Chair and Vice-Chair for 2021.

Chair and Vice-Chair Nomination:

Board Member Tsai nominated Vice-Chair Hill to be Chair. Board Member Younger seconded the nomination of Vice-Chair Hill for Chair.

Chair Smeaton nominated Board Member Tsai for Vice-Chair. Vice-Chair Hill seconded the nomination of Board Member Tsai for Vice-Chair.

Action and Motion:

MOTIONED BY BOARD MEMBER YOUNGER, SECONDED BY CHAIR SMEATON, CARRIED 5-0, to approve Samantha Hill as Chair and Melissa Hon Tsai as Vice-Chair, for Design Review Board effective immediately.

2. 2020 Annual Report and 2021 Work Plan

Recommendation:

Approval of the 2021 Work Plan.

Presentation:

Associate Planner Lim stated that the 2020 Annual Report and 2021 Work Plan were presented to the Board at the December meeting. The Board had approved the Annual Report but had changes to the 2021 Work Plan. She added that Staff was looking for the Board to approve the 2021 Work Plan tonight.

Chair Hill asked the Board if anyone wanted to review the 2021 Work Plan on the screen again.

Board Member Smeaton asked Staff for an update of the landscape plan requirements.

Planning Manager Kith stated staff had gotten some feedback from a former Board Member but did not update the landscape portion of the plan, as they had been busy with other priorities. She suggested the Board create a subcommittee to work with Staff to create a list of landscape requirements.

Board Member Smeaton suggested that the landscape requirements were not a real “make or break” part of the plan and asked Planning Manager Kith if the Work Plan was still usable in the current form.

Planning Manager Kith stated it was usable in the current form and added that ultimately the goal was to create a brochure for property owners.

Board Member Smeaton suggested moving the landscape requirements discussion to a meeting later in the year.

Chair Hill asked for a motion.

Action and Motion:

MOTIONED BY VICE-CHAIR TSAI, SECONDED BY BOARD MEMBER SMEATON, CARRIED 5-0, to approve the Work Plan for 2021 with a change that the landscape guidelines be part of the commercial and residential design guidelines update for the end of the year.

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| PUBLIC HEARING |
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3. Project No. 2343-DRX/SGN-Design Review for façade remodel and Sign Permit for an existing grocery store, (Pavilions Grocery Store), located at 1213 Fair Oaks Avenue.

Board Member Smeaton recused himself since he lives within 1,000 feet of the project site.

Recommendation:

- Formation of a Subcommittee to work with the applicant on design improvements; and
- Continue to DRB Meeting on March 4, 2021.

Presentation:

Contract Planner Krause presented the staff report. Planning Manager Kith provided an update to the presentation. The designer and applicant were present but did not have a presentation.

Vice-Chair Tsai asked staff about materials and it was determined she would ask the applicant when the time was right.

Board Member Carlson asked if the monument sign size would be same as it is currently or larger.

Contract Planner Krause stated it would be the same size.

Chair Hill asked staff if the applicant took the art piece to the Public Art Commission.

Planning Manager Kith said they were planning to bring it to the Public Art Commission this month.

Public Comments:

There were no requests to speak at the meeting so the public comment portion was closed.

Board Member Questions for Applicant:

Chair Hill asked if anyone had questions for the Applicant.

Vice-Chair Tsai asked if the cement plaster, replacing the stone texture, was a stucco or a fiber cement board, and if it was the same material and texture as near the loading dock.

Architect Cedric Craig stated it was cement plaster and yes, it was the same as the material and texture as was used near the loading dock.

Vice-Chair Tsai wanted to know if the wood was natural wood or a composite.

Architect Craig said it was not real wood and that they wanted fake wood because of its durability.

Board Member Carlson said he could not find any detail of the new concrete texture in the presentation.

Architect Craig said it is all cement plaster with a light sand texture.

Chair Hill asked the applicant if the removed art panels would be replaced with other artwork.

Architect Craig said the original intent was to use the art panel to break up the horizontal line. However, there was more flexibility with the placement of the screens. They were able to add trees with the screens. Albertsons was also concerned that going through the Public Art Commission would take too much time.

Paul Herman from Albertsons reiterated what Architect Craig stated and added that they liked the rhythm of the design with the three panels and trees.

Board Member Discussion:

Vice-Chair Tsai started the discussion by talking about how hard it is to make the look of a box store correlate with South Pasadena architecture. She also mentioned that she understood there were budget constraints.

Chair Hill agreed with Vice-Chair Tsai and felt this new design was an improvement to what was currently there. She commended the architect for what he was able to do with the façade. She was a little disappointed to see the art piece go away and felt it would take a long time for the trees on the northern façade to mature to what it looked like in the pictures. She does like the Longboard product.

Board Member Carlson liked the new design of the façade from the recent renderings more than the artwork. He suggested larger trees at the north elevation.

Chair Hill asked Planning Manager Kith if the Board could request larger trees.

Planning Manager Kith said they could ask the applicant about increasing the size of the trees. She also suggested requesting 1-2 art panels in between the trees instead of three. She stated the Board could approve tonight and make options conditions of approval, letting them move forward in the meantime. The sign, however, is not ready for approval.

Vice-Chair Tsai wanted to know if the Board could require them have an artwork.

Planning Manager Kith was not sure if the code allowed the Board to require things like artwork.

Architect Cedric Craig said they chose to pay a fee instead of providing artwork.

President of the architectural firm, Galen Grant, stated that the new design felt more consistent with front of the building and he preferred it to the artwork.

Board Liaison Mayor Mahmud stated that in terms of public art requirement, artwork is required for development projects.

Board Member Younger supported the artwork element.

Vice-Chair Tsai stated she preferred the black panels to the artwork. Even if they pay a few in lieu of incorporating artwork, those fees will go towards artwork on a different project.

Chair Hill said she was leaning towards approving the project and letting them move forward and pay the art fee.

Board Member Younger was fine moving forward.

In the discussion of how the motion should be worded, Board Liaison, Mayor Mahmud suggested that language be added to encourage applicant to reconsider the sizing of the proposed trees.

Architect Paul Herman stated he is ok with larger trees and specific requests of tree species.

Action and Motion:

MOTIONED BY BOARD MEMBER YOUNGER, SECONDED BY BOARD MEMBER CARLSON, CARRIED 4-0, to approve the façade and parking lot renovation and upsize the trees on the north elevation, based on staff recommendation and with conditions of approval. The signage portion of the project is not included in the approval.

4. **Project No. 2328-NID/DRX- Notice of Intent to Demolish a 1,442 square foot single-family home and detached 1-car garage, and Design Review of two new, two-story single-family homes (2,555 sq. ft. and 1,543 sq. ft.) and a 5-car underground garage at 1502 Bank Street.**

Board Member Smeaton rejoined the meeting.

Recommendation:

Approve, subject to conditions of approval.

Presentation:

Contract Planner Krause presented the staff report. The designer and applicant were present but did not have a presentation.

No questions for staff.

Public Comments:

One public commenter requested that the applicant relocate the fruit trees on the property and that construction not begin until next year.

Chair Hill asked staff if delaying construction and relocating fruit trees was something the City could condition.

Contract Planner Krause said the City could not delay construction as a condition. She suggested speaking to the applicant about considering relocating the fruit trees.

Board Member Questions for Applicant:

Chair Hill asked if applicant could get on line and asked for Board Member questions for the applicant.

Board Member Smeaton thanked the applicant for their revisions. His only question was about the alternate entry and the proposed entry. He prefers the proposed entry of the two.

Architect June said she was trying to balance the comments from the last Design Review Board Meeting and preferred the proposed arch but would do whatever the Board suggested.

Board Member Discussion:

Board Member Carlson suggested reducing the arch height in the alternate design so that it is the same scale as the original proposed.

Board Member Smeaton said he felt the arch could drop down to 8 feet and give “more meat” on the top of the arch from the spring line to the roofline and then the project works.

Chair Hill said other than that issue with the entry arch height, the applicant addressed all issues with the project.

Vice-Chair Tsai said she felt all the elevations were now well proportioned. She originally preferred the proposed design but now, with the discussion of bringing the arch down in the alternate design, she liked it.

Action and Motion:

MOTIONED BY BOARD MEMBER SMEATON AND SECONDED BY VICE CHAIR TSAI, CARRIED 5-0, to approve the design as submitted on the revision with the additional revision of the alternative entry elevation but also dropping the arches on all three sides down to eight feet based on staff recommendation with conditions of approval.

- 5. Project No. 2307-DRX-Design Review and Minor Hillside Development Permit for 657 square-foot addition and the removal of a wood deck and covered patio of an existing tri-level, single-family residence located at 1230 Koll Avenue.**

Board Member Smeaton recused himself.

Recommendation:

Approve, subject to conditions of approval.

Presentation:

Contract Planner Ortiz-De Anda presented the staff report. There was also a presentation from applicant.

Chair Hill asked staff to clarify the condition of the uninhabitable space.

Contract Planner Ortiz-De Anda stated that with the addition, the project was very close to the property reaching the maximum floor area ratio (FAR) of 0.35 and therefore this particular space cannot be converted to habitable space.

Chair Hill asked if they could do a JADU in the future since the space would not count towards the FAR.

Contract Planner Ortiz-De Anda stated yes.

Public Comments:

There were two public comments from residents who support the project as proposed.

Applicant Presentation:

Architect Jim Fenske introduced himself and shared his presentation.

Vice-Chair Tsai asked Architect Fenske about the eve that looked exaggerated and very different from the existing eve.

Architect Fenske stated he was vacillating between exposed eve timbers so it looked more like what is over the entry and said he was worried about it not tying into the front.

Chair Hill asked Architect Fenske about the small pop-up in the back with the slanted roof and skylight. She felt it appeared awkward.

Architect Fenske stated that it is not visible from the street and barely visible from above and though it may look awkward, it provides a benefit from the inside. It is at the end of a hall and provides a view across the canyon.

Chair Hill said she understood his point. She then closed the public hearing.

Board Discussion:

Board Member Younger liked the facelift done to the house.

Chair Hill agreed.

Board Member Carlson stated that there was an awning on one window and not the two other windows on South elevation and asked why.

Vice-Chair Tsai stated the awning was not on the drawings.

Architect Fenske said he was fix that.

Vice-Chair Tsai stated that she does not love the exaggerated eve on the north side. She did not feel this was a deal breaker to approving the project.

Chair Hill added that if the eve served a functional purpose, she would support having it.

Chair Hill liked the idea of seeing other options like one tying it in with the front. She also added that if you bring in the eaves in, she would recommend an even more extreme slope in the roof.

Architect Fenske stated that he felt the shallow pitch and deep eaves go together.

Board Member Carlson was in agreement with Architect Fenske and stated that he liked the post and beam “feel” of the overhang.

Action and Motion:

MOTIONED BY BOARD MEMBER YOUNGER, SECONDED BY VICE-CHAIR TSAI, CARRIED 4-0, to approve the project based on staff recommendation with conditions of approval, including adding sun shades to the two additional windows on the south elevation.

6. Project No. 2357-DRX, Design Review for a 796 square-foot addition and improvements to a single-family residence at 804 Milan Avenue.

Board Member Smeaton rejoined the meeting.

Recommendation:

Approve, subject to conditions of approval.

Presentation:

Contract Planner Krause presented the staff report. Applicant was present and had a presentation as well.

Associate Planner Lim reminded the Board that the applicant had requested to delete condition in P14 from consideration.

Vice-Chair Tsai asked staff if the applicant was required to keep the windows in the front existing.

Associate Planner Lim said the applicant was not required to keep the front existing windows.

Board Member Smeaton commented that we are pushing right up against the FAR with this project.

Public Comments:

Contract Planner Krause stated that there were two comments from neighbors in support of the proposal and one comment from the applicant wishing to remove condition P14 from consideration.

Applicant Presentation:

Chair Hill asked if there was a presentation from the applicant.

Planning Manager Kith played a presentation from Architect Odom Stamps.

Vice-Chair Tsai asked Architect Stamps if the proposed windows in the front were original to the house.

Architect Stamps said they would match the original windows in style but they were new windows and they met the Title 24 requirements.

Vice-Chair Tsai asked about the trim size around the windows.

Architect Stamps said it is approximately 4" x 1".

Board Member Smeaton stated he supported removing P14 from the requirements.

Board Member Carlson asked if there were plans to address the hardscape since it was not in character with the new design or the neighborhood.

Architect Stamps agreed but stated if they changed the hardscape, the house would have become a tear down. He stated that if the driveway were a straight path directly to the garage, the owners would have to back out onto the street. He suggested they screen the driveway with hedges or green scape.

Chair Hill asked if the loggia in back was open.

Architect Stamps said it was open.

Chair Hill then suggested that there are ways to solve the hardscape issue with pavers or other materials that allow grass to grow between them. She also said she understood safety backing out was an issue and most important.

Architect Stamps said he would discuss with his client. He also suggested maybe replacing the concrete with gravel.

Planning Manager Kith stated that per the zoning code, no more than 45% of the front yard could be paved. She suggested that the front hardscape be approved by Chair Review.

Chair Hill closed the public discussion.

Board Member Discussion:

Chair Hill opened the meeting to Board Member comments.

Board Member Smeaton liked the design overall and agreed that there should be a Chair Review of the driveway and yard.

Board Member Younger thought the project was a great upgrade.

Board Member Carlson liked the project except for the hardscape in front.

Chair Hill agreed the project was an improvement. Her only concern was the front yard parking area and hardscape.

Vice-Chair Tsai said the project was a tremendous improvement.

Action and Motion:

MOTIONED BY VICE-CHAIR TSAI, SECONDED BY BOARD MEMBER YOUNGER, CARRIED 5-0, to approve the project with the condition of deleting the condition P14 and adding a Chair Review of the front hardscape.

7. Project No. 2297-DRX – Design Review for a 583 square-foot addition with a 140 square-foot covered front porch and a 50 square-foot rear deck located at 5049 Collis Avenue.

Vice-Chair Tsai and Board Member Smeaton were recused because they live within 1,000 feet of the project site.

Recommendation:

Approve, subject to conditions of approval.

Presentation:

Planning Intern Rodriguez presented the staff report.

The Board had no questions for staff.

Public Comments:

None.

Applicant Presentation:

Applicant presented the project to the Board.

No questions for the applicant.

Board Member Discussion:

Board Member Younger thought it was a nice use of property and charming house.

Chair Hill liked that the addition was happening in the front and landscaping was quaint.

Board Member Carlson concurred that it was a good use of space.

Public Comments:

None.

Action and Motion:

MOTIONED BY BOARD MEMBER YOUNGER AND SECONDED BY BOARD MEMBER CARLSON, CARRIED 3-0, to approve the project based on staff recommendation with conditions of approval.

Board Member Smeaton and Vice-Chair Tsai rejoined the meeting.

CONSENT ITEMS

None

PRESENTATIONS

None

DISCUSSION ITEMS

None

ADMINISTRATION

8. Comments from City Council Liaison

City Council Liaison, Mayor Mahmud, welcomed Board Member Carlson joining the Board. She also expressed gratitude to the Board and residents for their good work.

9. Comments from Board Members

None.

10. Comments from Subcommittees

None.

11. Comments from Staff

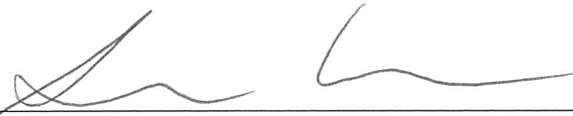
Planning Manager Kith reminded Board that they have Brown Act training on February 10. In addition, she reminded Board Member Smeaton to put together the annual report for 2020 for a City Council meeting in March. She also stated that the City Council would be reviewing the Seven Patios project on March 3. She also stated that there will be an ADU workshop for the community on Wednesday night at 7:30 p.m. after the Brown Act training and she encouraged the Board to attend. Her final announcement was that the Commissioner's Congress this year would be held virtually after the Council Meeting in March.

ADJOURNMENT

12. Adjourn to the regular Design Review Board meeting scheduled for March 4, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.

There being no further matters, Chair Hill adjourned the Design Review Board meeting at 9:35 p.m.

APPROVED,


Samantha Hill, Chair – Design Review Board


Date

10/5/23