



**CITY OF SOUTH PASADENA
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD**

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

THURSDAY, September 1, 2022 AT 6:30 P.M.

**CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
1424 MISSION STREET, SOUTH PASADENA, CA 91030**

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Samantha Hill called the Regular Meeting of the South Pasadena Design Review Board to order on Thursday, September 1, 2022 at 6:40 p.m. The meeting was conducted as a hybrid meeting, both on ZOOM and in person at the Council Chambers located at 1424 Mission Street, South Pasadena, California; Members of the public attended via ZOOM for Covid safety purposes.

**ROLL CALL
PRESENT:**

Joe Carlson, Board Member
Brian Nichols, Board Member
Kay Younger, Board Member
Melissa Hon Tsai, Vice-Chair
Samantha Hill, Chair

**STAFF
PRESENT:**

Angelica Frausto-Lupo, Director of Community
Development
Matt Chang, Planning Manager
Karolina Gorska, Contract Planner
Susana Martinez, Associate Planner
Sandra Robles, Associate Planner
Braulio Madrid, Associate Planner
Lillian Estrada, Administrative Secretary

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Majority vote of the Board to proceed with Board business.

Chair Hill asked if Board Members or Staff had any changes to the Agenda. 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.

Vice Chair Tsai drove by Bristol Farms.

Board Member Carlson stated he lives two doors down from one of the houses and he will recuse himself from that agenda item. He also drove by the lot on Pasadena Avenue and Bristol Farms.

Board Member Younger stated that she is at Bristol Farms every other day.

Board Member Nichols drove by Bristol Farms and the Pasadena Avenue project.

Chair Hill drove by Bristol Farms and the Pasadena Avenue project.

PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Public Comment – General (Non-Agenda Items)

Administrative Secretary, Lillian Estrada, announced that there were no general public comments.

CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS

2. Minutes from the Regular Meeting of June 2, 2022

3. Minutes from the Regular Meeting of July 7, 2022

No changes to minutes of June 2, 2022 or July 7, 2022. VOTED BY BOARD MEMBERS, CARRIED 5-0, to approve the minutes as submitted.

PUBLIC HEARING

4. 2008 Edgewood Drive (APN:5321-002-012)

To allow the construction of an 824-square-foot addition to the rear of an existing 1,695-square-foot single-family dwelling.

Recommendation:

Approve the project, subject to the recommended conditions of approval.

Staff Presentation:

Board Member Carlson recused himself from the item due to living within 1,000 feet from the subject property.

Associate Planner, Susana Martinez, presented the staff report.

Chair Hill moved to questions for staff.

Board Members did not have any questions.

Chair Hill opened the hearing for public comments.

Public Comments:

With no requests to speak, the public comment period for Agenda Item No. 4 was closed.

Applicant Presentation:

The applicant representative and designer, Georgiana Chung, did not have a presentation, but was available to answer questions.

Board Members did not have questions for Ms. Chung.

Board Member Discussion:

Board Member Younger stated that it is a lovely design and fits the neighborhood.

Vice-Chair Tsai agreed and added that the design was very balanced.

Chair Hill agreed and added the design was contemporary, and the scale made sense.

Motion and Action:

MOTIONED BY VICE-CHAIR TSAI, SECONDED BY BOARD MEMBER NICHOLS, CARRIED 4-0, to: approve the project based on staff recommendation with conditions of approval.

5. 5 Pasadena Avenue (APN: 5311-002-012), Project No. 2491-DRX:

To allow the development of a vacant lot with a new 1,848-square-foot commercial building, a 1,196-square-foot patio cover, and other associated site improvements related to the project.

Recommendation:

Approve the project, subject to the recommended conditions of approval.

Staff Presentation:

Associate Planner, Braulio Madrid, presented the staff report.

Chair Hill moved to questions for the staff.

Board Member Carlson asked for renderings of the 8-foot fence surrounding the property.

Mr. Madrid said that it would be wrought iron and would not be view obstructive, as conditioned by the Department of Public Works. Mr. Madrid explained that an eight-foot fence was permitted in a commercial zone, as long as it was not adjacent to residential.

Chair Hill asked why the fence was required under conditions of approval.

Mr. Madrid stated the applicant wanted the fence to prevent theft and the condition was added so that it did not obstruct visibility.

Vice-Chair Tsai asked if the project did not become a restaurant, would the trellis and covered patio still be allowed for other use types.

Mr. Madrid said the covered patio would be allowed for other use types per their administrative use permit.

Vice-Chair Tsai asked if the covered patio would require more parking.

Mr. Madrid responded that it would not.

Vice Chair Tsai asked if the use changed from restaurant to something else, would parking requirements change.

Mr. Madrid said it would not and added that the parking ratio was 10 per 1,000 square feet for a restaurant use. Mr. Madrid added that if another use would come in, there would be a reduction of parking spaces by 3 or 4 per 1,000 square feet.

Chair Hill noted that lot coverage was 21 percent and added that there was a lot of parking for such a small building. She stated that she is aware of relaxed parking standards for housing and asked if there was any relief for parking for this commercial project.

Mr. Madrid said that because the intended use is a restaurant, it was meeting the minimum requirement of parking spaces. He also added that providing less parking may limit the tenant pool for the applicant.

Chair Hill stated that she was aware of discussions regarding additional mobility measures to reduce parking, such as bike spaces and ride share. She added that her concern is having large surface parking lots along a commercial corridor. Chair Hill requested that staff look into finding a way to reduce the parking requirements.

Mr. Madrid stated that reduced parking would require a variance and variances were not allowed for parking. He added that the applicant would not be allowed to have a restaurant with any lesser parking.

Chair Hill asked if the applicant can phase the project so that if there are any policy changes in the future, reduced parking can be accommodated. She noted that this question may be better suited for the applicant.

Board Member Nichols wanted to know where the location of the house was in relation to the restaurant property and asked if the proposed project was impacting the house in any way.

Mr. Madrid provided a 3-D aerial image showing a vacant space with trees between the restaurant property and the house. He said the space would remain vacant.

Board Member Carlson asked about parking for the property and noted that there does not appear to be any parking along Pasadena Avenue. He added that if the use were to be a restaurant, the parking would be needed; as there are not any other places to park.

Chair Hill closed questions for staff and opened the hearing for public comments.

Public Comments:

With no requests to speak, the public comment period for Agenda Item No. 5 was closed.

Applicant Presentation:

Mr. Madrid noted that the applicant does not have a presentation, but is available to answer questions.

Chair Hill invited the applicant to the podium to introduce themselves.

Steve Dahl introduced himself as the architect for the project and explained that the property was previously designed with an office use, but after the pandemic, there was more demand for restaurant use with outdoor dining. Mr. Dahl commented that he agreed with Chair Hill's comments regarding parking, he said that architects design around parking requirements and noted that the City of Pasadena has relaxed parking standards for restaurant use. He added that Pasadena does not permit parking on a corner and he thought the City may want to consider adopting similar standards, as he wanted to have the parking in the back of the property to bring the outdoor dining as a focal point to the design. Mr.

Dahl spoke about the fence and stated that it is a plain fence, but the focal point is the landscaping, which was designed by June Scott. He stated that the fence will be covered with Bougainvillea vines. He added that they plan to bring in a full-sized tree and crate it in and create the outdoor dining around the tree in the outdoor patio. Mr. Dahl also spoke to the topography of the property and that it was previously a hillside property that was infilled with dirt left over from the freeway project. He added that this required the building to be engineered with 20-foot caissons. He further explained that this is the reason why the parking is on the downhill side. As per the long narrow design of the building, Mr. Dahl stated that the structure is meant to serve as a buffer for the smell that comes from a nearby horse stable. Mr. Dahl mentioned that Public Works Condition 21, regarding upgrading the street front, was removed by staff. Mr. Dahl stated that he is still contesting the Public Works Condition 42 that requires a site line study from both of the driveways.

Vice-Chair Tsai asked about built-up roofing.

Mr. Dahl stated that most of the roof would not be visible.

Vice Chair Tsai followed up by asking if the patio had built-up roofing.

Mr. Dahl confirmed.

Vice-Chair Tsai asked about the material on the underside of the roof.

Mr. Dahl stated that it was a metal fascia with smooth finish stucco underneath.

Vice Chair Tsai commented that the trellis had a cool trapezoid shape, which she was expecting to be continued in the trellis design, but then it changes to a rectangular shape.

Mr. Dahl said he liked that note and added that it should be added as a condition.

Vice Chair Tsai asked if the trellis was made of wood or trex.

Mr. Dahl said it was made of metal because wood does not hold up well.

Vice-Chair Tsai noted that they are different colors, but same material.

Mr. Dahl confirmed.

Vice-Chair Tsai noted that the elevations call out silver aluminum, but the renderings have a black frame. She noted that the black frame looks nice and added that she was hoping to see what the silver would look like in the renderings.

Mr. Dahl said that the silver was intended to be consistent with the neighboring property, but added that he also felt the black looked nice. He suggested adding the color change as a condition.

Vice-Chair Tsai noted that the west elevation has a stucco frame around the windows where on the other elevation brick goes all the way up to window, which she stated would be a preferred detail. She added that she was unclear why there are two different details for the two elevations.

Mr. Dahl concurred that there are two different details.

Vice-Chair Tsai asked about the outdoor counter material.

Mr. Dahl said it was sealed concrete.

Board Member Nichols asked if the metal trellis would be capped at ends.

Mr. Dahl stated it would be capped at the ends.

Board Member Nichols asked about the black trim and how it separates the metal up above. He also asked if they have ever considered painting out the rolling door and service door to match the brick.

Mr. Dahl said they did not consider painting out the rolling door and service door.

Board Member Nichols asked if there could be shared parking between the subject property and the property across the street.

Mr. Dahl said the owner does not want to tie the two properties with shared parking.

Chair Hill suggested conducting a traffic study specific to the lot to determine parking needs.

Mr. Dahl responded that there are many problems with parking in the City. He added that traffic studies are costly and takes months of time.

Chair Hill inquired about the choice to place bathrooms on the Pasadena Avenue side of the property, which she found to be a lost opportunity for the visibility of the indoor/outdoor area.

Mr. Dahl said the fence and landscape would cover it up and that the restaurant sign will be focal point on that side of the property, as Pasadena Avenue is not a pedestrian street.

Mr. Madrid added that staff felt that because the parking lot was one way, the entry to that parking lot should have the main entrance façade.

Chair Hill agreed it was complicated and noted that Pasadena Avenue has the potential of becoming a commercial corridor in the future, which could also serve to connect the street with our neighbors at Highland Park. She added that parking dictating the design is unfortunate.

Board Member Carlson asked about parking lot materials. He noted that initially the applicant was proposing gravel, but found it was not allowed. He wondered if other permeable materials had been considered, such as pavers.

Mr. Dahl said he would look into other options but that it is tricky with California state requirements, as storm water should be percolated within the site.

Chair Hill closed the Applicant Presentation and moved to Board Member Discussion.

Board Member Discussion:

Board Member Nichols had concerns about the blank façade facing Pasadena Avenue. He noted that it is an important façade and suggested possibility bringing the metal panel all the way down and it would result in a better material along the façade. He also stated that he would like to see the renderings redone with the accurate accent colors with the roof screening.

Vice-Chair Tsai stated that she would like to see the applicant address the covered patio; she said the shadow can follow the shape of the trellis. She agreed with Board Member Nichols and noted that the bathroom and counter element is recessed before the brick, but she also suggested that if the metal portion came down and wrapped around, encasing the brick portion, it would make it more interesting.

Chair Hill also expressed concerns about the blank wall along Pasadena Avenue and suggested that the applicant can add patterns, designs, or a mural to the wall to make it more inviting.

Vice-Chair Tsai suggested taking the stucco frame away and having it read the same as the other elevations from the patio side where the brick comes up to the window.

Board Member Nichols agreed with Vice-Chair Tsai's suggestions and emphasized that the design could be improved on the corner, where one corner has no frame.

Chair Hill agreed that the desire to have a variation in materials is great, but in this case, the design already has the metal, brick, and punch opening of the windows. She added that introducing a third element, such as the stucco, is not necessary. She further added that the massing gives a level of variation and is dynamic, she reiterated that another material does not need to be introduced.

Board Member Carlson asked what kind of material was the pergola.

Vice-Chair Tsai noted it was stucco and asked if it would be the same ochre stucco color noted elsewhere. She then asked the group what they thought about the color.

Chair Hill asked if the Board could comment on color. She then added that maybe the Board can comment on colors but cannot make a decision about the color.

Mr. Madrid stated there was no regulation to dictate color in the municipal code but that the Board may evaluate color for neighborhood compatibility.

Chair Hill stated that she loves the color.

Board Member Carlson agreed and stated that he also likes the color.

Chair Hill and Board Member Carlson agreed that they would like to see an updated rendering with fencing and landscaping—they want to see it all together.

Vice Chair Tsai asked the Board which they preferred: black or silver windows.

Vice Chair Tsai and Chair Hill both stated they prefer the black.

Chair Hill noted that the maintenance of the vine on wrought iron fence would dictate how much of black will be seen. She added that she would like to see the fence to make sure the Board is comfortable with it. Chair Hill asked the Board how they would like to move forward with the item—she asked if it would be appropriate to continue the item, form a subcommittee, or approve the project with a Chair Review.

Board Member Younger stated that she felt the subcommittee was not necessary, as the applicant appeared to know what he was doing.

Vice-Chair Tsai agreed and stated that the Board has given the applicant a lot of feedback.

Board Member Carlson added that he would like to see a rendering with all of the color schemes. He added that the full-sized tree was important to the project and did not want the applicant to change the tree to a smaller tree.

Vice-Chair Tsai asked if the tree would come first or the trellis.

Chair Hill said that the size of the tree can be conditioned.

Mr. Madrid stated the Board could add conditions of approval at this point of the hearing and what the Board would be doing is approving the shell and overall

design of property. He added that the architectural details and articulations would be finalized through the Chair Review.

Planning Manager, Matt Chang, suggested two motions be made or Board Members could continue this discussion to next meeting.

Motion and Action:

MOTIONED BY CHAIR HILL, SECONDED BY VICE-CHAIR TSAI, CARRIED 5-0, to: continue the item to the October 6, 2022 Design Review Board Meeting. Additionally, subcommittee of Board Member Nichols and Vice-Chair Tsai was formed to work with the applicant.

6. 606 Fair Oaks Avenue (APNs: 5318-004-024 and 5318-004-018), Project No. 2431-DRX-AUP-ADMIN MOD:

To allow for the remodel of two existing buildings; Building “A” is an existing 36,321-square-foot Bristol Farms Market and Building “B” is an existing 10,114-square-foot multi-tenant commercial building. The project proposes the following changes to Building “A”: façade improvements, removal of a glass canopy along the south side of the building to be replaced with a new covered entry tower and open trellis, and a new 409-square-foot outdoor dining patio and trellis above, with a proposed sign. Proposed changes to Building “B” include façade improvements.

Recommendation:

Approve the project, subject to the recommended conditions of approval.

Staff Presentation:

Contract Planner, Karolina Gorska, presented the staff report.

Chair Hill moved to questions for staff.

Board Member Nichols wanted to confirm that the main grocery store building has plaster over the block, which is then painted over. He noted that the new elevations with the smaller building only says paint; he asked if they are just painting the block of the smaller buildings and asked if the smaller buildings were not getting the plaster. He noted that the elevations no longer showed the block pattern. In addition, Board Member Nichols requested more information on the decorative façade elements.

Staff deferred to the applicant.

With no other questions for staff, Chair Hill opened the public hearing for public comments.

Public Comments:

With no requests to speak, the public hearing period for Agenda Item No. 6 was closed.

Applicant Presentation:

Architect Mark Giles presented. Mr. Giles answered the earlier questions from the Board; he confirmed that they are plastering over the block and only painting the shop building to match the larger building. He also said they will be bringing back the decorative elements and he would be happy to have a discussion regarding the Board Member suggestions.

Board Member Carlson asked if the decorative elements would be appliques only.

Mr. Giles replied that they would be appliques. He added that there would be wrought iron design elements on the building.

Board Member Carlson asked why the awnings over Building "B" appear to be opaque, possibly from age, and do not appear clear.

Mr. Giles said they are dark glass and they will be cleaned and water-proofed and removed from the Bristol Farms building, but not from the shop building.

Board Member Carlson stated he thought it was shame the canopies could not be removed from the shop building as well.

Board Member Nichols stated that the façade facing Fair Oaks Avenue is the most prominent façade and where the original café is being demolished and built in, there is only one decorative element. He asked if there would be more decorative elements incorporated into the café.

Mr. Giles said they would happy to do more with that façade. He explained that there are currently two levels between the café and Bristol Farms and added that they are going to dig down so that they are all one level and they are widening the opening, so that there is a better connection throughout the grocery store.

Chair Hill asked if there was a walkway between the building and the patio.

Mr. Giles said that there is a walkway, sidewalk, and a planter on the Fair Oaks side.

Chair Hill stated that the reason she mentioned the walkway was that the accessible parking spaces were across the drive aisle and sometimes there is not enough space.

Mr. Giles stated that there was not enough space and that it was a challenge because of the grade, but that they are reactivating more accessible spaces by the parking structure. He added that there are seven in the parking lot and one in the parking structure.

Chair Hill also inquired about the tall blade sign and asked if it was being addressed or if it would remain as is.

Mr. Giles said it was staying as is; he added that they were cleaning the metal panels and painting. He explained that the sign is grandfathered-in and they did not want to touch it.

Chair Hill said she felt it was a missed opportunity not to do something additional with the blade sign since the sign can be seen from the freeway.

Mr. Giles added that they were already over their sign size allowance.

With no further questions for the applicant, Chair Hill moved to Board Member Discussion.

Board Member Discussion:

Board Member Younger thought the design was great.

Vice-Chair Tsai says it is a great improvement. She also noted there are planters where the old café is, which would add a lot of greenery.

Chair Hill likes the addition of the outdoor space.

Board Member Carlson asked if the Board would like to condition the addition of appliques.

Board Member Nichols stated that the rendering was a little misleading because there are trees along the façade and stated that it is not as much of an issue as it appears in the drawing.

Action and Motion:

MOTIONED BY VICE CHAIR TSAI, SECONDED BY BOARD MEMBER YOUNGER, CARRIED 5-0, to: approve the project, subject to the recommended conditions of approval.

ADMINISTRATION

7. Comments from Board Members

Board Member Carlson commented on a previous project. He stated that for the Pavilions project, the Board added a condition of approval that the trees on the north side of the property would be bigger. He added that now that the project is complete, the trees do not appear bigger. He suggested that the Board go back and look at the minutes from that meeting.

8. Comments from Subcommittees

None.

9. Comments from Staff

Community Development Director, Angelica Frausto-Lupo, stated that recruitments continue and there will be a new Assistant Planner starting on Tuesday. The City was also recruiting for a Planning Counter Technician as well as a Deputy Director. Director Frausto-Lupo mentioned that the next draft of the Housing Element was expected to be out for public review on September 8th and encouraged anyone who is interested to go to the website, library, or City Hall to look at the drafts. The Housing Element will be sent to HCD on September 15th. Finally, she said she would ask staff to look into the tree size at Pavilions.

ADJOURNMENT

10. Adjourn to the regular Design Review Board meeting scheduled for October 6, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. Chair Hill said she would not attend at this meeting.

There being no further matters, Chair, Samantha Hill, adjourned the Design Review Board meeting at 8:45 p.m.

APPROVED,



Samantha Hill, Chair – Design Review Board

9/7/2023

Date