

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD  
CITY OF SOUTH PASADENA  
CONVENED THIS 4<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF MAY, 2017  
AMEDEE O. "DICK" RICHARDS, JR. CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
1424 MISSION STREET**

<b>ROLL CALL</b>		<p>The meeting convened at: 7:00 PM</p> <p>Board Members Present: Conrado Lopez (Chair), Jim Fenske (Vice Chair), Susan Masterman, Mark Smeaton</p> <p>Board Members Absent: None</p> <p>Staff Liaison: Edwar Sissi, Assistant Planner</p>
<b>NON-AGENDA ITEMS</b>	1.	No Discussion
<p><b>CONTINUED ITEMS</b></p> <p><i>Note:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project not reviewed at this meeting.</li> </ul>	2.	<p><b>412 Grand Avenue</b> <b>Project Number: 1990-DRX</b> <b>Applicant: Srinivas M. Rao, Architect</b></p> <p><b>Project Information:</b> A request for Design Review Board approval for a 645 sq. ft. single story addition to an existing 1,586 sq. ft. single story house on a 6,500 sq. ft. lot. And to demolish a 441 sq. ft. detached garage and replace it with a 400 sq. ft. attached carport trellis. The design of the existing house will change to a modern/contemporary design. The single story addition will consist of a new master bedroom, a new living room/dining room, and a new kitchen. The proposed exterior materials will consist of: stucco siding, ribbed fiber cement panel (gun-smoke color), fiber cement panel (concrete color), slate tile for the roof, Fibrex windows, and a wood for the rear trellis and the carport trellis.</p> <p><b>Presentation:</b> Project not reviewed at this meeting.</p>
<p><i>Note:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Susan Masterman, DRB member, and project applicant, recused herself from the review of this project, and exited the Council Chambers during the project review and vote. Her assistant, Iris, presented the project before the DRB.</li> </ul>	3.	<p><b>2040 Edgewood Drive</b> <b>Project Number: 1996-DRX</b> <b>Applicant: Susan Masterman, Architect</b></p> <p><b>Project Information:</b> A request for Design Review Board approval for a façade change and a new porch design. The proposal is to remove the existing brick veneer, the wood trim, the two bay windows, the three windows on the second floor, and replace the front door. The new materials will consist of stucco siding to match the existing siding, new French doors to replace the bay windows, two double hung wood windows to match the existing, two casement wood windows to match the existing, and a new front door with new sidelites. Window shutters are proposed on the second floor windows. The roof for the new porch will consist of wood shake, to match the existing house.</p> <p><b>Presentation:</b> Project presented by design associate, Iris. Iris presented the project as desperately needed and long overdue facelift. The project is minor in scale, but a major improvement to the neighborhood and the property. The proposal is to remove the awkward façade changes added in the</p>

	<p>1960s or 1970s with a façade restoration that is in line with the colonial architecture of the house.</p> <p><b>Questions from the Board:</b> Fenske: Asked for a cut sheet for the columns, typically made by the Chadsworth company.</p> <p>Iris: The drawings contain the details of the columns.</p> <p>Smeaton: Asked if the columns were made of wood or fiberglass.</p> <p>Iris: The columns will be wood.</p> <p><b>Applicant Response:</b> Iris introduced the homeowner, Planning Commissioner Janet Braun. Braun mentioned that she has had plans to restore the façade for the past 18 years since she bought the property. She has noticed many issues with the current design and is happy to finally move forward on her house restoration.</p> <p><b>Public Comments:</b> There were no public comments.</p> <p><b>Board Discussion:</b> Smeaton: Thought the drawings were detailed quite well and appreciates the scale of the proposed front entry and reducing the dual-height that is currently there.</p> <p>Lopez: Thought that the proposed façade restoration is beautiful.</p> <p>Fenske: Thought the project was great.</p> <p><b>Board Decision:</b> Lopez: Made a motion to approve the project as submitted and that it meets the Findings.</p> <p>Fenske: Seconded the motion.</p> <p><b>Approved as submitted 3-0 (Masterman, recused) and that the project meets all the required Findings.</b></p>
<p><b>NEW ITEMS</b></p>	<p>4. <b>245 Fair Oaks Avenue</b> <b>Project Number: 1961-DRX-MOD</b> <b>Applicant: 245 ZNE, LLC c/o: Peter Tolkin Architecture</b></p> <p><b>Project Information:</b> A request for a Design Review for the modification to a project that was approved in October of 2008 as a new 10,493 square foot, two-story medical office building elevated on columns over at-grade parking with vertical landscaped exterior screen walls. The approval has been extended since then due to office market conditions.</p> <p>The modification to the original approved design includes the proposal to enlarge the building to a gross 15,991 square feet of medical office space. Additionally, the project will no longer incorporate a green screen wall system. Rather, the applicant is proposing to utilize vertical fabric louvers stretched over warped aluminum framing. The project site is located in</p>

between the Metro Gold Line tracks, and the Fair Oaks Avenue corridor directly north of the historic War Memorial Building site. The scope of Design Review also includes a Master Sign Plan. The DRB will need to approve the allowance for the monument sign to exceed the standard maximum height of three feet.

The project also involves the demolition of an existing 2,949 square foot single-story office building and accompanying parking lot along with the removal of several existing trees to make way for the new project construction. The site is zoned Commercial Office (CO) and is part of the Professional Office land use General Plan designation.

*Important to note: The proposed project currently sits on two parcels. The project will require the consolidation of these two parcels into one 23,049 square foot lot. A condition of approval will be placed on the project stating that no building permits will be issued until the parcel merger is complete and proof of parcel merger recordation is given to the City.*

**Applicant Presentation:**

Peter Tolkin mentioned the last time he was here to present the original project and its subsequent requested time extension so that arrangements can be made with SoCal Edison to turn the project into a Zero Net Energy Building. Mentioned that the overall design and footprint has remained the same with the current design iteration of a two-story structure located over at-grade parking. The major change in the design is the removal of the previously approved green screen for an undulating fabric louvre system to act as the sunshade. SoCal Edison is a partner in the project, and they have been working closely with an energy consultant company along with Fabritech, the fabric manufacturer of the louver system. This collaborative effort has changed the energy analysis of the building and resulted in other design changes including the location of the exterior corridor. The exterior corridor was originally approved along the eastern façade that faces Fair Oaks Avenue, but is now changed to the western side that faces the Gold Line tracks as a solution for passive solar design. The building will have solar panels, and highly efficient air conditioning, high performance glazing and insulation. Closed circuit monitoring of the energy use of the building. There is a potential for PV battery storage, a possibility of four electric vehicle charging stations to market the building for possible future regulations against fossil fuel use and production. The project will serve as a test with carefully monitored and analyzed energy data that will be implemented towards future zero-net-energy buildings which may become a State mandate in the future. There IS hope that this building will be seen as furthering sustainability goals.

The screen is meant to animate the façade and project a sense of movement as it is located next to Fair Oaks Avenue and the Metro Gold Line. The building is being speculated as a medical office building and is reflective of the general interest/demand in that market. Peter displayed a series of computer graphic models, and physical models that reflected the drawings and the overall proposed design of the project including the landscaping and projected shade/shadow from the louvers.

Another change presented with this modification was a redesigned main entry that reconnects the building from the street and provides a connective street and pedestrian interface. The floor plan is shown as divided with units, but a single tenant can occupy one floor plate.

The fabric on the louvers is PTFE which is Teflon-coated fabric and is warranted for 20 years. The fabric is durable, and has been in place for 40 years on some projects, notably the University of La Verne. Fabric, as opposed to metal, is more flexible with replacements and has been proven with durability from other projects. The angles of the warped louvers are not just for aesthetic purposes, but it was designed in conjunction with the engineer to maximize heat and solar blockage.

The applicants are hoping to attain LEED Platinum Certification along with Zero Net Energy. Funding has been obtained, and the applicants are aware of the Parcel Merge that will need to take place before the Building Division will issue Building Permits.

**Questions from the Board:**

Masterman: Asked staff if this project has to go before the Planning Commission and if the residents on the other side of the Metro Gold Line tracks are notified of the Public Hearing.

Sissi: The project does not need to go before the Planning Commission, as this type of development and the projected use is allowed by right. Every resident within a 300 foot radius of the subject site are notified irregardless of the train tracks.

Masterman: Asked for explanation for the reasoning behind the decision to change the project from a green wall to a pretty bright white structure. Also, how does this building fall into the Design Guideline for commercial structures and can the applicant address context.

Lopez: Asked how the screen is connected to the building and how the fabric gets replaced when it is time for replacement. He also asked if the fabric thickness (frame) is consistent throughout or does it expand or contract as the screen warps up the façade of the building.

Smeaton: Noted how the applicant has done numerous studies on the dominate screen system to ensure they actually function as a shading system on top of an aesthetic benefit. Expressed concern that the fabric system will not be maintained as the building changes ownership or management over the course of its life. Appreciated the work of the applicant and how they addressed the complexities of the site. Smeaton also mentioned the oak trees that will be removed as part of the proposed project. Has the applicant constructed a mock-up of the screen, and is there a potential that the screen does not fabricate as shown on the drawings?

Lopez: Noticed that the parapet has a slope to it and asked how high the proposed roof solar panels were going to be.

Smeaton: Noted that the parapet follows the slope of the topography of the site.

Masterman: Noted that the overall height is 35 feet, which is the maximum allowable, and if this was simply a simple division of floor plate and ceiling heights squeezed into the maximum allowable height.

**Applicant Response:**

Tolkin: The project went from a green wall to a white shading system is

equally architecturally significant to how it functions as a building. Contextually, the building is in a funny situation, but is responsive to Fair Oaks Avenue and has a strong relationship to the City of Hope. We feel these two buildings work fairly well together.

The green living screen was changed out of practicality due to the recent drought emergency the State has faced and potential droughts severities that are predicted for the future. The green screen was eliminated for waster sustainability reasons.

The screen is connected by a three-point connection. There is one connection point at each of the floor levels that connects to a vertical 2x2 tube that runs vertical to the face of the building. From that tube, the frame expands outward 16 inches in a 2x2 aluminum tube that twists into the pattern as presented. The fabric is seamed at each twist of the screen frame at the back side and it will be very taut and not at all billowy. The seam of the fabric will be at the backside of the vertical support beam. The frame of the screen can be removed from the building if and when the fabric needs to be replaced, and reinstalled at completion.

The fabric does not expand, or become volumetric. The fabric is very planar and maintains a constant dimension as it follows the warped screen frame. The fabric will always maintain a 2 inch thickness in line with the thickness of the screen frame.

The oak trees and their removal is being mitigated. There were originally oak trees that were to be preserved, but a recent inspection by the City Arborist noted that those trees are not specimens that can be saved, so the applicant will have to proceed with a replacement mitigation process. Once building permits are pulled, the applicant can proceed with the tree removal permits and the mitigation process as prescribed by the Public Works Department.

There are multiple forces on architecture to address context and some of them are using technology to address some of the concerns that are arising regarding energy use. The applicant is really trying to create a building of authentic expression that works closely with the environment and feels very strongly that it will have a nice relationship with the landscape with its landscaping plan and surrounding environment.

The applicant strongly intends to build what they are presenting and understands that if the design of the screen needs to change, it will require an additional review process. The applicant also mentioned they bid out the project to several fabric system manufacturers and they did not settle on the lowest bidder, but rather the fabricator with a proven track record, Fabritech. The manufacturer has worked on several high-profile projects including the 2012 London Olympic Stadium and the new LA Rams stadium in development.

The solar panels will follow the slope of the parapet and they will all be lower the parapet wall. The angle of the solar panels will be about 10-15 degrees and are very closely represented in the models presented before the Board. The solar panels will not be seen above the parapet wall.

The height of the building was primarily driven by the energy savings desired for the project. Medical office buildings typically have higher

ceilings than what we are proposing, but it should be noted that they are not moving chilled air through the building, they are moving chilled refrigerant.

The site is so restrictive, and is similar to a straight-jacket on the building. The building adheres to the Zoning Code requirement of a 20 foot setback which the applicants do not agree with in terms of promoting urbanity, but they did not want to pursue a variance for a less restrictive setback. Given these three conditions, the setbacks, the shape of the lot, and the energy requirements, the height of the building was achieved. It should be noted that only one corner at the south corner of the building is at the maximum height of 35 feet, while the rest of the building is less.

**Public Comments:**

There were no public comments.

**Board Discussion:**

Lopez: Noted the memo from Planning that the project review is for the demolition of the existing small office building, the approval of the proposed medical building, and the master sign program.

Lopez: Noticed the signage area of the wall sign changes height as the parapet slopes with the grade.

Masterman: Respects the challenge of the site, the difficulty of the site, and addressing the freeway quality of this part of the City on Fair Oaks. Noted that the quality of Fair Oaks falls apart north of Mission and the lack of quality buildings including the brick building at 625 Fair Oaks, Raymond hill with the stucco box apartment buildings, and the City of Hope with its interesting combination of styles and materials. She also noted the 3-4 historic moments along Fair Oaks: the Oaklawn Bridge, the War Memorial Building, and the old trolley stop. The proposed project is simple, or as simple as it has to be because the building really only is a stucco box with aluminum storefront windows. The only real architectural detail is the vertical louvers. Wanted to know how this new building meets the contextual findings and how it can be identified with South Pasadena.

Smeaton: The building definitely creates an edge and helps define Fair Oaks. It is helping close some gaps that is a much needed issue along Fair Oaks. Believes this project is a strong and simple statement, and believes it fits in the findings.

Lopez: Believed Masterman brings up a good point, but the eclectic nature of that area lends itself to a more contemporary design, and the straight jacket approach to its design works really well for the site. The height is lower than the City of Hope, and lower than the apartment buildings hovering over the street above Raymond Hill. Lopez was really skeptical of the green screen concept and its feasibility as an efficient building, and appreciates the new change as a more practical and honest approach at mitigating energy use. Lopez would like to see a mock-up of the screen when it is available, and appreciates that the applicants are selecting a proven manufacturer and a proven fabric product. The success of this building is going to be completely related to this proposed screen and it is important that the screen lasts. Lopez also liked the idea of placing the corridor along the west side which makes sense for energy sustainability.

Smeaton: Appreciated that the western corridor is also planned as a waiting area for the medical offices which will allow for patrons to see the trains roll by and lends a romantic aspect to the project. He also expressed gratitude that the green screen is being replaced with the fabric screen due to Southern California's arid climate.

Fenske: Prefers the new proposed fabric screen over the previously approved green screen. The quality of the building is important from the stucco finish, to the framing of the screen, and the simplicity of the design is significant. Fenske likes how the building appears to lift off from its columns.

Masterman: Wanted to express her concern that though this project is in response to the slope, and the speed of the car, it does not reflect a response to the neighborhood. She refers to the Design Guidelines, and mentions the encouragement of awnings, and other features to provide a pedestrian relationship. The vocabulary of the building as a whole, the form of its wedge shape, its setback and disconnect with the ground plane impose hurdles for establishing a relationship with pedestrians.

Lopez: Countered Masterman's concerns, by stating that he believes the building is responsive to the site and its conditions, although he did agree with Masterman that the required setback imposes a hurdle to establishing a positive pedestrian-oriented urban experience. He stated is suspicion that if the building were to try to be more urban, it would not create a catalyst for activating a more urban and walkable part of the City given its location and its surroundings. With the building being set back, the proposed landscaping will help to soften the building and make it better.

Fenske: The building may not scream South Pasadena, but it will give good visibility to the City by being the first Net Zero building in Southern California as the applicant states. He mentioned he was also drawn to the strong shape on legs that is sort of lifting of with pieces of fabric to soften it and provide additional visual curiosity.

Smeaton: Thinks that the strength is in the projects simplicity and that is particularly important as the surrounding context is rather complicated.

Sissi: Reminded the Board to approve the overage of the standard size of the monument sign to the proposed size, approve the Master Sign Plan, and approve the demolition of the existing building, and approve the project meets the Findings.

Lopez: Regarding the demolition of the existing offices, he believes there should be no controversy in regards to its demolition for the construction of the new proposed project. Lopez liked the signage, and how the wall sign followed the angle of the parapet and that the monument sign size as presented was okay.

**Board Decision:**

Fenske: Made a motion to approve the project as submitted including the demolition of the existing building, the construction of the new proposed multi-story building, the Master Sign Plan including the enlarged size of the proposed monument sign, and that a Condition of Approval be placed on the project that no Building Permits be issued until the Parcel Merger is

	<p>recorded with the County, and also that the project meets the required Findings.</p> <p>Smeaton: Seconded the motion.</p> <p><b>Approved 3-1 as submitted and that the project meets all the required Findings.</b></p> <p><b>Ayes: Lopez, Fenske, Smeaton</b>  <b>Noes: Masterman</b></p>
<p><b>Discussion Items</b></p> <p>Note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Jim Fenske, DRB member, and project applicant, recused himself from the review of this project, and exited the Council Chambers during the project discussion. His wife, Lorie, presented the project before the DRB.</i></li> </ul>	<p>5. <b>629 Alta Vista Circle (CONCEPTUAL REVIEW)</b>  <b>Applicant: Jim Fenske, Architect</b></p> <p><b>Project Information:</b>                  A request for a conceptual review regarding the proposal to add a 480 sq.ft. single story addition and a 296 sq. ft. second story addition to an existing 1,618 single story house on a 6,840 sq. ft. lot. A new 500 sq. ft. garage/carport is proposed. The proposed addition is located on the front side elevation of the house. A new modern design is proposed for the entire structure.</p> <p><b>Applicant Presentation:</b>                  Lorie noted that the house sits in a prominent location, and that the existing house has a 1970s feel. The homeowner would like to expand their home, and redo the design of the house. The new garage will be pushed out towards the street, and the whole garage will be glass to display the luxury car the homeowner has. The garage entry will change requiring a new sweeping driveway. The garage doors will be the telescoping glass doors that slide open and closed. All the windows will be replaced, while the exterior will be modern smooth stucco, fiber cement siding, standing seam roof, and steel cable railing on the exterior decks. The entry has changed. There is a skylight, and an additional lightwell clad in lpe wood.</p> <p><b>Questions from the Board:</b>                  Lopez: Inquired what the brown material was on the front.</p> <p>Lorie: It is the perplex product from Spain.</p> <p>Smeaton: Noted on the east elevation that there seems to be a lot going on and it is a little too chaotic with the massing, and two different types of railing. The design is not cohesive, and it needs to be simplified. Noted that the 3d model is different than what the elevations show, and that the Board generally prefers the 3d model. Also noted that he traced over the floor plans, and they do not line up, so the drawings should be more accurate. There are too many materials and too many differences in design style for this to be a successful project. Expressed concern with the possibility of setting a precedent for the glass garage doors and the possibility of starting a trend.</p> <p>Lopez: Thinks the back elevation is more successful due to its simplicity. The front is notable for the original structure on the right, the addition on the left, and the transitional space in separating the two. There needs to be more of a blend between the two volumes in the front. Expressed some concerns with a glass garage and the display of storage out on public display. Also expressed concerns with the possibility that the owner will not use the garage for parking, but rather for storage. The front</p>



		<p>elevation needs more cohesiveness from the existing to the new, and is not sure that the dichotomy of design between existing and old is not necessarily successful.</p> <p>Masterman: The volumes are fine, but the materiality and the roof forms are too complicated. Some elevations are fine as the massing relates, but on other elevations, that vocabulary is missing. Asked the Board what precedent will be set, if none already exist, to allow for a transparent garage. The materials should be simplified, the massing needs to relate to each other, and the transparent garage though intriguing is slightly troublesome.</p> <p>Smeaton: Asked Staff what decks count towards in Planning.</p> <p>Sissi: Noted that decks do not count towards the FAR, but they do count towards the Lot Coverage.</p>
<b>Board Comments</b>	6.	None
<b>Staff Comments</b>	7.	None
<b>APPROVAL OF MINUTES</b>	8.	The Minutes from the April 2017 DRB meeting were not reviewed.
<b>ADJOURNMENT</b>	9.	The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:15 p.m. to the next regularly scheduled meeting on June 1, 2017 at 7 p.m.

Approved,

  
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Conrado Lopez, Chair

10.12.17  
Date