

MINUTES APPROVED AT THE DRB MEETING ON FEBRUARY 26, 2025

DESIGN REVIEW BOARD REGULAR MEETING
Multi-Purpose Room, Community Services Building, Basement Level
440 Civic Center Plaza, Richmond CA 94804
January 22, 2025
6:00 P.M.

BOARD MEMBERS

Bahar Biazar	Kimberly Butt
Ben Kellman	Karlyn Neel
Vita Rey	Brian Carter, Chair

Chair Brian Carter called the regular meeting to order at 6:02 P.M.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Brian Carter, and Boardmembers Bahar Biazar, Ben Kellman, Karlyn Neel and Vita Rey

Absent: Boardmember Kimberly Butt

INTRODUCTIONS

Staff Present: Planners Hector Lopez, Kristi Ellerbroek, Pete Srivarom and Noora Soroushnejad, and Christopher Dykzeul from the City Attorney's Office

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: None

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: None

Chair Carter switched Items 1 and 2 on the agenda to be able to consider Item 2 first.

MEETING PROCEDURES: None

PUBLIC FORUM

No written comments were submitted, or oral comments made, by any member of the public.

CITY COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT: None

CONSENT CALENDAR: None

APPEAL DATE

The appeal date for actions taken by the Board at this meeting will be no later than 5:00 P.M. on Monday, February 3, 2025.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

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| 2. | PLN24-116 | IGLESIAS SINGLE-FAMILY DWELLING |
| | Description | REQUEST FOR A DESIGN REVIEW PERMIT TO CONSTRUCT A |

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±1,752 SQUARE-FOOT TWO-STORY SINGLE-FAMILY DWELLING
ON A VACANT PARCEL.

Location	3905 JENKINS WAY
APN	408-054-001
Zoning	RL-2, LOW DENSITY SINGLE-FAMILY DISTRICT
Owner	ELVA DINORA ARGUETA-PAREDES
Applicant	TULIO IGLESIAS
Staff Contact	KRISTI ELLERBROEK Recommendation: CONDITIONAL APPROVAL

Kristi Ellerbroek presented the staff report dated January 22, 2025 for a Design Review Permit to construct an approximately 1,700 square-foot two-story single-family dwelling on a 5,000 square-foot relatively flat undeveloped parcel in the Parchester Village neighborhood at 3905 Jenkins Way. She reported that the Capital Corridor heavy rail line was situated approximately 70 feet to the west in the rear of the property, with views of Point Pinole Regional Park across the railroad.

Ms. Ellerbroek advised that the surrounding neighborhood contained single-family residences predominately one- and two-stories in height. The site had originally been developed in the 1950s with market-rate residences for middle-class worker housing. Over the years, the neighborhood had seen upgrades to existing structures such as second-story additions and roof replacements for pitched-style roofs. She reported the subject site had been vacant since the early 2000s since the previous single-family residence built in the 1950s had been demolished due to fire damage.

The applicant proposed a 1,700 square-foot two-story single-family dwelling with three bedrooms, 2.5 bathrooms, a kitchen, dining and living room with a one-car garage and an 80 square foot front porch extending three feet into the front yard, and a 100 square-foot concrete slab attached to the rear of the dwelling. A six-foot wooden fence around the perimeter of the site had also been proposed. The project required design review because of its size. She detailed the standards in which the project complied and identified proposed conditions of approval to address any areas of concern.

Ms. Ellerbroek reported that the nearby structures included one-and two-story single-family homes that predominately featured flat, gable and shed roofs similar to the proposed residence. The proposed dwelling featured a minimal traditional architectural style similar to the surrounding neighborhood. The proposal would feature a 4 by 12 pitch gable roof and an 8 by 12 pitch gable facing the street. Exterior building materials included stucco siding in light grey, asphalt composition shingle roof in graphite with blue grey light rectangular posts, vinyl windows in a white trim, a solid core wood entry door and an aluminum garage door in chestnut brown with white trim.

Ms. Ellerbroek noted that staff had provided feedback to the applicant to ensure the plans were accurate and to further enhance the design, although the plans contained graphic errors. Staff requested DRB feedback of potential façade improvements to further improve the design in consideration of the project proposal. She identified several recommendations including horizontal belts between the two stories on the street-facing façade to break up the massing; ornamental window shutters on the primary bedroom's window on the street-facing façade to enhance the overall character of the facade while providing compatibility with the existing neighborhood character; and the addition of side-facing windows on the exterior wall of the residence to add visual interest and windows to create natural breaks on the south elevation by the dining area on the first floor and the primary bedroom on the second-floor, with windows on the south elevation to maximize the amount of natural sunlight entering the residence during the

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winter months and on the north elevation a window could be incorporated by the stairway to provide a natural break on the side façade and views into the yard.

Ms. Ellerbroek also recommended decreasing the length of the bathroom window to provide more privacy and account for the standard dimensions of the proposed bathroom features that would be affixed to the interior wall shared with the window; an alternative garage door design to provide more ornamental detail to break up the massing and further enhance the façade design; and aligning the front door with the left edge of the upper story window to make the façade elements symmetrical.

Ms. Ellerbroek stated if the recommended enhancements were incorporated into the design it would improve the residence's design composition and enhance the neighborhood's character. She highlighted the four proposed Findings and Statements of Fact, reported that all required zoning and General Plan requirements had been met, and recommended that the application be approved along with the staff recommended 10 conditions of approval. She also noted that at the time of the release of the staff report no public comments had been submitted on the proposed project.

Ms. Ellerbroek responded to questions from the DRB related to the texture on the aluminum garage doors and reiterated the staff recommendation for an alternative garage door to provide more ornamental detail to break up the massing; clarified that the proposed roof overhangs did not encroach greater than allowed into the side yards; and explained that the front yard fence could be six feet solid all the way around because it was not all within the front yard setback.

TULIO IGLESIAS, the applicant, responded to questions related to the lack of windows on the sides of the building and noted that if required, he would be happy to provide windows on the side elevations. He also explained that the windows would be bronze with white trim and stated that there would be a contrast between the darker color of the fascia and the lighter color of the body and everything would be matched.

Boardmember Biazar liked the selected colors but suggested that the evening blue would be better for the trim and around the windows.

As to whether he would be amenable to add high garage door windows, Mr. Iglesias commented that the neighborhood was not safe and adding such windows would allow access into the home and it was a safety concern to him. He confirmed there were no windows in the garage and agreed that windows in the area of six-inches or so could be considered.

Boardmember Neel stated with respect to the front and garage doors that the chestnut brown was rich and she did not see the need to add more decorative elements. She suggested the color would pop and the simplicity was acceptable.

Boardmember Rey liked the idea of a belly band above the garage in the evening blue color and an expansion joint would be needed anyway because of the stucco. With respect to the large window in the bathroom, she suggested something smaller could be considered. As to the staff recommendation to align the upstairs window with the front door, she suggested that shutters could be added to both the upstairs windows with the second-story window shutter to align with the jamb of the front door.

Mr. Iglesias agreed with the recommendation for a smaller window in the bathroom, and with respect to the double window above the garage and explained that there would be more decorative trim around that window.

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Boardmember Neel noted the need to improve the scale of the double window above the garage.

Boardmember Kellman concurred with many of staff's recommendations but did not support the proposal for shutters. He suggested that could be a maintenance issue and it was a specific style that the DRB should not impose.

Mr. Iglesias explained that the front of the house was small, he did not want it to become too busy with shutters and he preferred to keep it simple, presentable and uniform. He also wanted the home to be compatible with the rest of the neighborhood.

Boardmember Kellman supported the idea of a belly band, which was consistent with the other homes in the neighborhood, and he recommended considering the belly band all around the residence. He also supported some windows on the side elevations to break up the elevation and provide more natural light.

Boardmember Rey recommended a window for the upstairs stair corridor to offer more natural light and to avoid a cavernous feel.

Boardmember Biazar verified Mr. Iglesias' safety concerns related to having more windows and recommended the use of skylights. She also agreed with the need to carry the belly band all the way around the building to break up the mass.

Mr. Iglesias described his design with respect to windows and explained that the living room, dining room and kitchen had been designed with an open concept, with recessed ceiling lights and other lighting. He agreed with the need for more natural lighting.

Chair Carter closed the public hearing.

Ms. Ellerbroek clarified it was her intent for one of the recommended conditions of approval to recommend that one or the other window could be considered for the right side but she did not necessarily recommend both windows.

The DRB discussed the additional staff-recommended conditions of approval and did not support the use of shutters, agreed to reduce the downstairs bathroom window, supported the front door where located, supported the recommendation for a single window added to each bedroom and one on the stairway, and recommended no change to the garage door. A vertically-oriented window on the second floor was also recommended to allow the most amount of lighting on the entire stairway and the corridors. There was also a recommendation that the window trim be the darker blue fascia trim color.

ACTION: It was M/S/C (Kellman/Neel) with a friendly amendment (Rey) to approve PLN24-116, Iglesias Single-Family Dwelling, subject to the four Findings and Statements of Fact with the staff recommended 10 Conditions of Approval; with the additional DRB conditions as follows: 11) A horizontal belt (belly band) to extend around the building; 12) Add a vertically-oriented window on the second floor to allow the most amount of lighting on the entire stairway and the corridors; 13) A single window to be added to each bedroom and one on the stairway; and 14) Decrease the length of the bathroom window to provide more privacy and to account for the standard dimensions of the proposed bathroom features that would be affixed to the interior wall shared with the window; Approved by a Roll Call vote: 5-0 (Ayes: Biazar, Kellman, Neel, Rey and Carter; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: Butt.)

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1. PLN24-315	CIBULA SECOND-STORY ADDITION
Description	REQUEST FOR A DESIGN REVIEW PERMIT TO CONSTRUCT A SECOND-STORY ADDITION AND FOR FIRE DAMAGE REPAIR. PORTION OF THE SECOND-STORY WOULD BE WITHIN A NONCONFORMING FRONT YARD REQUIRING APPROVAL OF AN ADMINISTRATIVE USE PERMIT.
Location	5224 NEVIN AVENUE
APN	519-310-012
Zoning	RL-2, LOW-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT
Owner	PETER CIBULA
Applicant	DILIP KHATRI (ENGINEER)
Staff Contact	PETE SRIVAROM
	Recommendation: CONDITIONAL APPROVAL

Pete Srivarom presented the staff report dated January 22, 2024 for a Design Review Permit for a 5,100 square-foot lot at the corner of Carlston Street and Nevin Avenue in the East Richmond neighborhood currently developed with a 1,944 square-foot two-story single-family house built in 1955. Most of the neighborhood had been built in the 1930s. The home currently had two bedrooms, two bathrooms and a two-car garage. The home had been damaged by fire in May 2024. The fire occurred in the garage and the damage required that the garage be reconstructed. The scope of the project related to the repair of the fire damaged garage with a 244 square-foot addition to the second story of the garage adding on to the existing second bedroom on the second floor with an additional closet and bathroom making it a master bedroom with a total proposed floor area of 2,164 square feet. He added the garage had a nonconforming setback of eight feet where normally in the zoning district a 20-foot setback was required. Building a second-story addition on top of a nonconforming garage would require an Administrative Use Permit.

Mr. Srivarom stated that the proposed addition complied with the building standards of the zoning district with the exception of the nonconforming front yard setback. Overall, the proposed addition and renovation would utilize complementary design features and materials that enhanced the aesthetic values in the neighborhood, and the design enhancements would help the project better relate to the traditional styles in the neighborhood.

Mr. Srivarom spoke to the façade and massing of the second floor, pointed out a new window to match the existing window on the second floor and stated at street level the addition would be 22 feet in height and 14 feet in width. The first and second floor would be bisected by a 12-inch roof overhang in the front, and the first- and second-story addition would be aligned on the same wall. He recommended that the second story be recessed by 12 inches to visually break up the mass from the street. The garage was nonconforming in size and the requirement for a two-car garage was 20 feet in width and 20 feet in length, although this garage was 20 feet in width and 17 feet in length. To help guide that situation and get more space for parking, staff recommended relocating the stairs in the garage slightly to the near wall to allow more parking space in the nonconforming garage.

With respect to design, the addition would match the color and existing exterior materials. The home was light grey stucco with light grey horizontal siding on the second floor with dark blue trim. The garage front elevation included stucco on the right side and vertical wood siding on the left. The prevalent exterior material of the home and proposed addition was horizontal siding. Staff recommended modifying the vertical siding on the garage to horizontal siding to conform with the rest of the first floor.

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Mr. Srivarom stated that if the recommended enhancements were incorporated into the design it would improve the overall composition of the overall project. As of this date, there had been no comments from the East Richmond Neighborhood Council, although three comment letters had been received from neighbors related to concerns such as impacts from street parking and reduced visibility when driving.

Mr. Srivarom stated that the proposal met all requirements of the Design Review Permit and he recommended approval of the Design Review Permit and the Administrative Use Permit and identified the findings required along with the staff recommendations and conditions.

Chair Carter clarified the Administrative Use Permit process, in this case related to the request to build the second floor over the currently nonconforming garage, which was set eight feet from the front property line where 20 feet was required, and the DRB's role in that process where in this case the DRB's opinions were being sought as to the appropriateness of that request.

Mr. Srivarom responded to questions, primarily related to the ability to reconstruct a nonconforming use (the garage) and he clarified the Administrative Use Permit in that regard. He also clarified that there could be no parking in the driveway because it was nonconforming and there was insufficient length to safely park cars that would have to be parked in the garage or on the street.

Chair Carter opened the public hearing.

DILIP KHATRI, the designer of record, stated that he and the property owner were in agreement with the staff recommended conditions. With respect to the driveway and the front setback, he emphasized the tight lot and issues related to the extension of the garage. He pointed out that the square footage calculation from staff did not match the calculation on the plans, and he commented that the City's calculation was correct and the applicant's plan would be corrected. The square footage was in compliance with all requirements.

Mr. Khatri noted the suggestions with respect to the garage and stated he had no problem with the recommendation to move the stairs. As to the issue with the driveway and the garage doorline, he understood that the driveway was not long enough to accommodate vehicles given that there was only 8.8 inches to what should be a 20-foot setback consistent with the zoning district. He understood that the City was okay with the existing footprint and he accepted that.

With respect to the staff recommendation to recess the second floor by 12 inches to reduce the massing, Mr. Khatri stated that would add structural costs to the applicant and he did not think that would be a good design citing safety concerns. It would be done, if required, but he stated that structurally it was not a good suggestion. He added that the building was also being retrofitted seismically to bring the whole house up to code.

Mr. Khatri reiterated that he had no objection to the rest of the staff-recommended conditions.

PETER CIBULA, the property owner, asked if the City could accept a situation where a window could overhang the garage, as shown, but still keep the house in line with the structure. There was currently an overhang that would be extended (to extend the eave) an additional six to eight inches to achieve the staff-recommended look while not compromising the structure by building on top of the wall.

Boardmember Kellman understood there would be additional costs involved and he suggested the alternative recommended by the property owner would not alleviate the concern.

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Boardmember Rey suggested that the wall should be pulled back 12 inches, as recommended.

Mr. Khatri clarified the second-story floor plan, noted that the existing bedroom was being expanded and a bath would be added and the building would be kept within the existing envelope. He agreed with the recommendation to switch the orientation of the siding to all horizontal and clarified that the siding on the second story stopped at the belly line.

On the discussion, the DRB noted that the siding created a choppy effect on the second floor and Mr. Khatri recommended getting rid of the siding on the second floor and using stucco, and getting rid of the siding on the garage and going back to the original with siding in the front, or use brick.

Boardmember Rey liked the siding on the first floor with the use of stucco on the second floor.

Boardmember Biazar verified that the designer was relocating a window on the second floor and noted that the location of the window above the garage did not appear to be in the same location on the floor plan and on the rendering.

Mr. Khatri stated that was an error and the correction would be made.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

SARAH ALEXANDER, 5318 Poinsett Avenue, Richmond, while aware of the extra costs involved asked that whatever could be done, be done to reduce the bulk and massing of the building for the sake of the neighborhood. She also spoke to the parking and the desire to make the garage accessible for two vehicles given that on-street parking was difficult on the narrow streets in the neighborhood, which had created unsafe conditions. She added that there were numerous cars associated with the subject dwelling.

JOANNA GOMES, 5323 Poinsett Avenue, El Cerrito, disagreed with the findings and suggested that the proposal did not meet the required findings in that the house was out of character with the neighborhood and adding an addition over the garage would make it look like a huge box. As such, she suggested the recess of the second story, as recommended, would not help. She agreed that cars should not park in the subject driveway since they blocked sidewalks. She asked how residents could be required to park in the garage and not on the street given the narrow streets and the current uneasy access by emergency vehicles.

HELEN ANNE CLIFTON, 5306 Poinsett Avenue, Richmond, commented that it was very difficult getting around the corner of Nevin Avenue and Carlston Street given the narrow street, on-street parking and the safety concerns created as a result. She stated the home was a multi-generational dwelling and the garage was always used for storage and she did not see how to ensure that parking would be in the garage. She also noted that the original building had been a one-story building and had been built up since that time. She described the house as massive and commented that it did not appear to be a single-family dwelling.

Chair Carter clarified for the public speakers that the DRB had little say in parking given that the street was a public street and the number of occupants on a property was also not within the purview of the DRB. He referred to requirements in the Municipal Code related to parking.

Boardmember Kellman characterized the application as a reasonable proposal. He noted that the garage had to be reconstructed anyway and the addition did not exceed the footprint of the garage. Also, the addition from the front elevation was narrower than the story beneath it and was relatively modest in size. With respect to the public comment, he had visited the site and

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disagreed that the building stood out and was incompatible with the neighborhood. He added that the number of vehicles involved, noise, and the number of occupants in a home was a code enforcement issue. With respect to the staff recommendation to recess the second-story addition, he did not feel the need to do that but suggested that could be done as a compromise for the neighbors. As to the design, he suggested the exterior could be all plaster or all siding.

Chair Carter suggested that the second-story addition should be required to meet the required 20-foot setback.

Boardmember Neel advised that she had also visited the neighborhood. She characterized the neighborhood as very special and cute. She wished the house was more in tune with the neighborhood, although she recognized that many of the homes had add-ons. The disadvantage of the subject site was that it was right on the corner, there was no setback and building up would only become more obvious. She agreed that the second-story addition needed to be pulled back and that story two blocking also needed to be fixed. She would then feel comfortable with the project.

Boardmember Biazar agreed with the need for a second-story pull back at three feet or so and did not object to the second-story being wider as long as it was consistent with City requirements.

Mr. Khatri pointed out where the second-story addition could be made wider, as wide as the garage if going back to the required setback.

Chair Carter closed the public hearing.

The DRB discussed whether the second story needed to be recessed and whether the plans would have to be revised.

<p>ACTION: It was M/S/C (Rey/Kellman) to approve PLN24-315, Cibula Second-Story Addition, subject to the eight Findings and Statements of Fact with the staff recommended 10 Conditions of Approval; with the additional DRB conditions as follows: 11) Rotate orientation of the siding on the first floor to all horizontal continuously, with no siding on the second story; and 12) Minimize and move the staircase in the garage; approved by a Roll Call vote: 4-1 (Ayes: Biazar, Kellman, Neel and Rey; Noes: None; Abstain: Carter; Absent: Butt.)</p>

Board Business

A. Staff Reports, Requests, or Announcements

Christopher Dykzeul from the City Attorney's Office advised that the Bylaws would be submitted to the DRB before the end of the week. He explained that the Bylaws would clarify the section about the selection of Chair and Vice Chair, and asked that any comments be submitted to him prior to the next meeting to allow the item to be agendaized for action.

B. Board Member Reports, Requests, or Announcements: None

Adjournment

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The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 P.M. to the regular Design Review Board meeting on Wednesday, February 12, 2025.