

MINUTES APPROVED AT THE DRB MEETING ON MARCH 12, 2025

DESIGN REVIEW BOARD REGULAR MEETING
Multi-Purpose Room, Community Services Building, Basement Level
440 Civic Center Plaza, Richmond CA 94804
February 26, 2025
6:00 P.M.

BOARD MEMBERS

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

Chair Brian Carter called the regular meeting to order at 6:09 P.M.

ROLL CALL

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

Absent: None

INTRODUCTIONS

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: January 8, 2025 and January 22, 2025

ACTION: It was M/S/C (Rey/Kellman) to approve the minutes of the January 8, 2025, meeting, as shown; approved by a Roll Call vote: 6-0 (Ayes: Biazar, Butt, Kellman, Neel, Rey and Carter; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: None.)

ACTION: It was M/S/C (Carter/Rey) to approve the minutes of the January 22, 2025, meeting, as shown; approved by a Roll Call vote: 6-0 (Ayes: Biazar, Butt, Kellman, Neel, Rey and Carter; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: None.)

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: None

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, March 10, 2025.

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PUBLIC HEARINGS

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| 1. PLN24-417 | GAUTAM SECOND-STORY DECK |
| Description | REQUEST FOR A DESIGN REVIEW PERMIT TO CONSTRUCT A SECOND-STORY DECK AND STAIRS IN THE REAR OF A RESIDENCE. |
| Location | 3024 KEITH DRIVE |
| APN | 431-152-005 |
| Zoning | RL-2, LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT |
| Owner | HIMLAL GAUTAM |
| Applicant | HIMLAL GAUTAM |
| Staff Contact | PETE SRIVAROM |
| | Recommendation: CONDITIONAL APPROVAL |

Pete Srivarom presented the staff report dated February 26, 2025, for a 97 square-foot second-story deck in the rear of the property at 3024 Keith Drive, a 6,500 square foot lot in the May Valley neighborhood in the El Sobrante area of Richmond. The single-family residence was surrounded by other single-family residences. Stairs to the deck would be on the side of the existing dwelling to the second-floor bedroom and wrap around the home and to the side. The proposed deck and stairs met all City zoning requirements except that the deck exceeded the threshold for height and required Design Review approval.

Mr. Srivarom identified the design of the home constructed in the 1950s with a white stucco exterior and black roof, gutters and trim. The deck would be a light redwood. There were no public comments from any neighbors or from the May Valley Neighborhood Council. The project was consistent with all design review findings, the General Plan, site regulations for accessory structures, and would overall enhance the architectural quality and livability of the residence.

Mr. Srivarom recommended that the project be approved based on the findings and conditions of approval shown in the staff report.

HIMLAL GAUTAM, the owner/applicant, had nothing to add to the staff report.

Boardmember Kellman supported the project and the well-done set of plans and engineering details and noted that with not much more effort and investment the applicant could extend the size of the deck to make it larger. He asked about the room underneath the deck and whether the deck would block the sun from that room.

Mr. Gautam responded to Director Kellman, although most of his comments were not completely audible on the recording of the meeting.

Chair Carter agreed with the comment about extending the size of the deck.

Boardmember Rey suggested if there were gaps in the decking, sunlight would be able to shine through. She supported the design of the proposal.

Boardmember Neel advised that the room below the deck would be significantly darker as a result of the deck, although Chair Carter commented that the deck might also serve as a sunshade.

Boardmember Biazar asked if there would be exterior lighting, and Mr. Lopez explained that a

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staff-recommended standard condition would require the applicant to meet City lighting requirements related to glare.

Boardmember Kellman supported exterior lighting for safety and security purposes.

Chair Carter closed the public hearing (although it had not been opened).

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

ACTION: It was M/S/C (Carter/Butt) to approve PLN24-417, Gautam Second-Story Deck, subject to the four Findings and Statements of Fact with the staff recommended nine Conditions of Approval; Approved by a Roll Call vote: 6-0 (Ayes: Biazar, Butt, Kellman, Neel, Rey and Carter; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: None.)

Boardmember Kellman advised that he was serving as a consultant to the City of Richmond on the Boorman Park Revitalization project.

Christopher Dykzeul from the City Attorney’s Office advised that Boardmember Kellman must recuse himself from the discussion.

Boardmember Kellman recused himself but remained in the Multi-Purpose Room.

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| 2. PLN21-007 | BOORMAN PARK REVITALIZATION |
| Description | REQUEST FOR A DESIGN REVIEW PERMIT FOR IMPROVEMENT AND RENOVATION OF BOORMAN PARK INCLUDING CONSTRUCTION OF A MULTI-USE TRAIL WITH FITNESS STATIONS, A SMALL SKATE PARK, AN ATHLETIC FIELD, A BASKETBALL COURT, A FITNESS ZONE, CHILDREN PLAY AREAS, AND A COMMUNITY GATHERING AREA. THE IMPROVEMENTS ALSO INCLUDE A PUBLIC RESTROOM BUILDING, TWO PARKING LOTS (22 SPACES), PARK BEAUTIFICATION (ARTWORK), A SHADE STRUCTURE, LANDSCAPING, WAYFINDING SIGNAGE, AND SAFETY FEATURES. |
| Location | SOUTH 25 TH STREET, NORTH OF MAINE AVENUE |
| APN | 549-020-036 |
| Zoning | PR, PARKS AND RECREATION DISTRICT |
| Owner | CITY OF RICHMOND PARKS DIVISION |
| Applicant | MARCIA VALLIER (CONSULTANT) |
| Staff Contact | HECTOR LOPEZ Recommendation: CONDITIONAL APPROVAL |

Hector Lopez presented the staff report dated February 26, 2025, for a Design Review Permit for improvement and renovation of Boorman Park with multiple proposed amenities. Boorman Park had originally been constructed in 1976, comprised 3.3 acres and was surrounded by low density residential, industrial uses and a railroad corridor. Some of the amenities included the construction of a multi-use trail with fitness stations, an athletic field, a basketball court, a fitness zone, children play areas, and a community gathering area. The improvements also included a public restroom building, park beautification (including artwork), a shade structure, landscaping, wayfinding signage, and safety features as shown in the schematic design.

Mr. Lopez stated the project had been reviewed by the DRB in study session in January 2021, when the DRB had suggested natural grass rather than artificial grass in the soccer field, relocating the bathroom as it was too close to the western residential boundary, and that the shade structure be a wooden structure rather than metal. The applicant responded to those

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suggestions by stating that natural grass would be provided, the bathroom structure would be located approximately 10 feet from the southern property line, and along the rear of the structure trees and shrubs would be proposed to screen the structure.

In addition, the applicant stated that metal was preferable for the shade structure because of potential vandalism.

Mr. Lopez stated that the applicant had incorporated most of the suggestions into the plan and he recommended approval of the Boorman Park Revitalization proposal in that it would be a great improvement.

MARCIA VALLIER, CSWST2, Inc., reported that she had been working on the project since 2019, and had gone through an extensive process of public participation with a number of Richmond neighborhoods when the City's parks had been evaluated pursuant to a number of different parameters with participation from hundreds of people. Out of that process, 20 City parks had been identified for revitalization, by priority. One of those parks identified was Boorman Park. She described the process that had been taken, the multiple public meetings held, identified the grants involved and noted in the case of Boorman Park all the grant elements were in place, although some had to be pared down because of the budget.

Ms. Vallier explained that while parking lots had not been pursued given that was considered a waste of money since there was on-street parking, what had been done was to stripe the unstriped street and include Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) stalls in two locations that she identified on a map. She commented that the community had decided to place an art project, a mural, within the basketball court that would involve a separate process with the Richmond Arts and Culture Commission (RACC) and the Public Art Advisory Committee (PAAC). She described a second art project that may or may not be included.

Ms. Vallier described other amenities and explained that there was a desire to separate out the younger kids from the older kids. She referred to the creation of seat walls for the skate element that would also serve to accommodate spectators at the basketball court. She also identified a small picnic area and a grass area, all connected to the looped trail. She pointed out that it was important to the community that people be allowed to do laps, and she referred to plan alternates and noted that one alternate was to have distance markers with inspirational quotes. She also pointed out other elements of the plan such as a soccer field with natural grass, a fitness hub, a kids play area with a grass pad, a shade structure and picnic tables with another large grass area, with the remaining area designated for stormwater management. The design of the bathroom structure had taken into consideration the need to address vandalism. There would also be a drinking fountain/bottle filler and a trash receptacle and changing tables in the restroom for both children and adults. She identified the designs of the various structures and benches, trash cans, skate wall, drinking fountain w/dog bowl, barbeques, soccer goals and lighting, along with proposed colors, primarily orange to match and go through all the various elements. She stated that all had been well considered and supported by the community.

Ms. Vallier identified the landscaping proposed with the use of fairly columnar trees around the various areas of the park with generally native plant material in a fairly low-maintenance scheme.

Mr. Lopez reported that an Environmental Initial Study had been prepared by the State Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) for the remediation of chemicals in soils at the park. Mitigation measures had been developed to ensure capping and institutional controls, excavation, soil stabilization, and offsite disposal.

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The Project Manager of the proposed revitalization for the City of Richmond, currently working in the City's Parks Department, introduced himself to the DRB.

Ms. Vallier responded to comments from the DRB and described some of the proposed alternatives, the vehicle access into the park that she pointed out on the map, and the historic dumping on the property that the introduction of more park users should help address. In addition, the proposed pedestrian light poles and slightly larger light poles were pointed out, to be dark sky, 300 k compliant, shielded to reduce glare and enhance security. Perimeter fencing would be six feet high.

Ms. Vallier stated with respect to the play equipment proposed to be installed that while the community had been given a lot of time and a number of options to consider including major play, industrial, and other types of play equipment, the community wanted more fantasy play, and the neighborhood and advocacy groups involved had selected the equipment identified. She added that the proposed play equipment had recycled content and was expected to hold up well over time. She estimated the cost of the proposed play equipment at \$500,000. As to who would pick the inspirational quotes, if used, she stated she could get input on that element and integrate some comments about Richmond historical or inspirational figures or timelines.

When asked, Ms. Vallier advised that the list of 20 parks was on the West County Regional Group of First 5 Contra Costa County, Richmond Parks Plan 2019. She added that they were clicking off Wendell, Shields-Reid, Boorman, Martin Luther King, Jr. Parks and Dirt World.

Chair Carter closed the public hearing (although it had not been opened).

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

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| ACTION: It was M/S/C (Butt/Rey) to approve PLN21-007, Boorman Park Improvements, subject to the four Findings and Statements of Fact with the staff recommended 10 Conditions of Approval; 5-0 (Ayes: Biazar, Butt, Neel, Rey and Carter; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: Kellman.) |
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Board Business

A. Staff Reports, Requests, or Announcements

Christopher Dykzeul reported that contrary to previous information, there were adopted DRB Bylaws from 2003, which were out-of-date and in need of touch up. He noted that the process by which officers were selected was acceptable in those Bylaws and would start with a selection committee that would be an action item for the following meeting agenda. The selection committee, a three-member panel selected by the DRB, would create a slate of members from which the DRB Board would elect its Chair and Vice Chair at the meeting following the creation of the selection committee. He clarified that the City Attorney's Office would make any requested changes to the DRB's Bylaws.

Boardmember Kellman suggested the simpler the better.

Mr. Dykzeul commented that the deadline to place an item on the next meeting agenda would be tomorrow. As such, he recommended placing two items on that agenda; a selection committee item and Bylaw revisions, and there could be action on either one at that meeting,

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allowing time for members of the DRB to offer comments or suggestions related to the Bylaws. He would send out a pdf version of the Bylaws to DRB members.

Boardmember Butt noted that she was due to be termed out in March, although she did not know the exact day that applied.

DRB Members expressed concern that the process related to the election of DRB officers was unnecessarily complicated and a simpler process was preferred. It was clarified that a change from that process would require an amendment to the Bylaws.

Boardmember Neel asked about a flow chart or anything available to notify the public about the process of taking a project through the DRB.

Mr. Lopez explained that there was a lot of information available depending upon the project.

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

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:18 P.M. to the regular Design Review Board meeting on Wednesday, March 12, 2025.