

**MINUTES APPROVED AT THE OCTOBER 8, 2025, DRB MEETING**

**DESIGN REVIEW BOARD REGULAR MEETING**  
**Multi-Purpose Room, Community Services Building, Basement Level**  
**440 Civic Center Plaza, Richmond CA 94804**  
August 13, 2025  
6:00 P.M.

**BOARD MEMBERS**

Brian Carter  
Karlyn Neel

Ben Kellman  
Vita Rey, Chair

Chair Vita Rey called the regular meeting to order at 6:02 P.M.

**ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Chair Vita Rey, Vice Chair Ben Kellman and Boardmembers Brian Carter and Karlyn Neel

**Absent:** None

**INTRODUCTIONS**

**Staff Present:** Planners Hector Lopez, Matthew Neuebaumer, Noora Soroushnejad, and Pete Srivarom; and Christopher Dykzeul from the City Attorney’s Office

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** July 9, 2025

**ACTION: It was M/S/C (Kellman/Rey) to approve the minutes of the July 9, 2025 meeting, as shown; approved by a Roll Call vote: 4-0 (Ayes: Carter, Kellman, Neel, and Rey; 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:**

<b>1.CC</b>	<b>PLN25-109</b>	<b>GONZALEZ SHED</b>
	Description	REQUEST FOR A DESIGN REVIEW PERMIT TO LEGALIZE AN EXISTING STORAGE SHED IN THE REAR YARD.
	Location	1825 ROOSEVELT AVENUE
	APN	514-180-004
	Zoning	T4N, T4 NEIGHBORHOOD (FORM-BASED CODE)
	Owner	ELIAS GONZALEZ
	Applicant	CESAR MARTINEZ

# MINUTES APPROVED AT THE OCTOBER 8, 2025, DRB MEETING

Staff Contact NOORA SOROUSHNEJAD Recommendation: **CONDITIONAL APPROVAL**

The DRB did not pull either Item PLN25-109, Gonzalez Shed, or PLN25-018 Closson Detached Deck from the Consent Calendar, and approved the staff recommendation to approve the two items with one motion.

**ACTION: It was M/S/C (Carter/Neel) to approve PLN25-109, Gonzalez Shed, subject to the four Findings and Statements of Fact with the staff recommended nine Conditions of Approval; approved by a Roll Call vote: 4-0 (Ayes: Carter, Kellman, Neel, and Rey; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: None.)**

**2.CC PLN25-0181 CLOSSON DETACHED DECK**  
Description REQUEST FOR A DESIGN REVIEW PERMIT TO CONSTRUCT A 7-FOOT-HIGH DETACHED DECK IN THE REAR OF AN EXISTING RESIDENCE.  
Location 5272 BUCKBOARD WAY  
APN 432-121-013  
Zoning RH, HILLSIDE RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT  
Owner DOUGLAS CLOSSON  
Applicant FLORES CONSTRUCTION  
Staff Contact PETE SRIVAROM Recommendation: **CONDITIONAL APPROVAL**

**ACTION: It was M/S/C (Carter/Neel) to approve PLN25-0181, Closson Detached Deck, subject to the four Findings and Statements of Fact with the staff recommended nine Conditions of Approval; approved by a Roll Call vote: 4-0 (Ayes: Carter, Kellman, Neel, and Rey; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: 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, August 25, 2025.

## PUBLIC HEARINGS

**3. PLN24-227 TACO BELL REMODEL**  
Description REQUEST FOR A DESIGN REVIEW PERMIT FOR SITE AND LANDSCAPING IMPROVEMENTS THROUGHOUT THE PROPERTY, ALONG WITH MINOR EXTERIOR FAÇADE RENOVATIONS TO THE EXISTING TACO BELL RESTAURANT.  
Location 2300 BARRETT AVENUE  
APN 515-190-017  
Zoning T5 CORE (T5C) (FORM-BASED CODE)  
Owner PRB MANAGEMENT, LLC  
Applicant GABRIELA MARKS  
Staff Contact MATTHEW NEUEBAUMER Recommendation: **CONDITIONAL APPROVAL**

Matthew Neuebaumer presented the staff report dated August 13, 2025, for a Design Review Permit for site and landscaping improvements throughout the property along with minor exterior façade renovations to the existing Taco Bell Restaurant. He explained that the one-story Taco Bell restaurant site with a drive-through component was located on the southeast corner of 23<sup>rd</sup> Street and Barrett Avenue in the North & East Neighborhood, surrounded by a mix of commercial, primarily auto related uses, and retail establishments along with some residential uses.

## **MINUTES APPROVED AT THE OCTOBER 8, 2025, DRB MEETING**

Mr. Neuebaumer provided photographs of the site and pointed out the existing landscaping comprised primarily of turf and four mature trees. There were 27 parking spaces.

Mr. Neuebaumer also pointed out that the Zoning Administrator had approved an Administrative Use Permit (AUP) on July 2, 2025, to allow the expansion of an existing non-conforming use by adding a second queuing lane for the existing drive-through. The AUP had been approved subject to conditions, one of which was the requirement for the Design Review Permit for the site and landscaping improvements throughout the property.

Mr. Neuebaumer compared the existing and proposed site plans and pointed out the differences, particularly the landscape differences where the turf would be replaced with drought-tolerant landscaping and with the landscaping enhancements to be placed around the site. The four existing trees would be maintained. He also pointed out the improvements proposed to the façade: a minor building expansion of 27 square feet to accommodate the installation of a new drive-through window; new paint of light and dark grey along the majority of the building façade, with the upper façade to be painted purple to match the Taco Bell corporate theme; patching and repairing of the existing stucco on all elevations; a new awning along the north elevation; new building signage along the north, south and west elevations; and new LED lighting directly beneath the accent trim band towards the bottom of the existing roof.

Mr. Neuebaumer stated the proposal fell within the T5C Form-Based Code and was subject to those development standards, although after review it was determined that those standards did not apply to the proposed project as there were minimal architectural changes to the existing structure not involving the construction of a new building. He reported that the applicant had received an e-mail of support from the North & East Neighborhood Council, and all property owners within 300 feet of the project site had been notified of the application and no comments had been received.

Mr. Neuebaumer stated the proposed site and landscaping improvements offered an overall enhanced aesthetic and the landscaping enhancements along both the 23d Street and Barrett Avenue frontages would improve the overall corridor and inspire adjacent property owners to update their properties as well. He recommended approval of the application based on the four Findings and Statements of Fact in the staff report along with the 11 staff recommended conditions of approval.

Boardmember Kellman noted the site plan did not match the floorplan and there were some misidentifications in the plans. In particular, he referred to the two new windows and stated the pop-up for the walk-up window had not been shown on the site plan.

Mr. Neuebaumer responded to questions and identified where the bump-out would be located on the east side with access from 23<sup>rd</sup> Street; clarified that the parking eliminated with the addition of the second drive through aisle would leave 14 on-site parking spaces which would be compliant with the City's parking requirements for the site of 11 to 16 parking spaces; and as to whether Hardie board could be used on the façade in the area where the stucco was painted black could be a concern given the architectural standards under the Form-Based Code.

Boardmember Kellman asked about exterior lighting and whether staff had analyzed the lighting study given his concern for what appeared to be insufficient lighting on the left side of the trash enclosure. He asked whether the space was as well lit as it was supposed to be, and Mr. Neuebaumer stated that the lighting plan had been studied and he read the staff recommended condition related to lighting into the record. He stated the trash enclosure itself had not been illuminated.

## MINUTES APPROVED AT THE OCTOBER 8, 2025, DRB MEETING

Chair Rey opened the public hearing.

GABRIELA MARKS, Marks Architects, Inc., described the changes related to parking.

With respect to the floor plan, Ms. Marks explained that the dining room was usually empty and would be completely redone and be clean and refreshed, and reconfigured to provide two kiosks with a safe area to provide secure walk-up windows to expedite service. She pointed out the windows involved, identified one as a window only to allow visibility of the drive-through aisle and stated the lobby would be closed at Midnight.

With respect to the request to place Hardie board to the base of the building to create more interest in the façade, Ms. Marks stated that cement board would not be consistent with the Spanish architecture but she proposed a brick veneer in the same color that would be more consistent with the building architecture, and which would look richer. She added that the roof style was existing.

Boardmember Kellman liked the design and the loss of parking spaces did not concern him given that the parking lot was usually empty.

Boardmember Neel was pleased with the proposed improvements and spoke to the landscaping plan and to one of the plant species proposed from the mint family. She recommended some lavender be added to the plant list to continue the color that had been proposed, although Ms. Marks stated that lavender was a higher water user and the recommended member of the mint family might get too big.

Boardmember Carter had no comments.

Mr. Neuebaumer explained with respect to the earlier question related to exterior improvements and their ability to be included under the Form-Based Code, that within the T5C district of the Form-Based Code there were five allowed architectural styles, one of which was called a Spanish Revival. While the Spanish Revival did not allow a brick façade, it did allow the use of tile. He noted that the Contemporary architectural style did allow a brick facade.

The DRB discussed the possibilities and determined that there was little difference between a brick veneer and a tile, and therefore accepted the applicant's recommendation to use brick veneer under the Spanish Revival style under the Form-Based Code.

Chair Rey closed the public hearing.

**ACTION: It was M/S/C (Carter/Rey) to approve PLN24-227, Taco Bell Remodel, subject to the four Findings and Statements of Fact with the staff recommended 11 Conditions of Approval; along with the following DRB condition: 12) Add a brick tile to the black base of the exterior façade; approved by a Roll Call vote: 4-0 (Ayes: Carter, Kellman, Neel, and Rey; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: None.)**

### Board Business

#### A. Staff Reports, Requests, or Announcements

Hector Lopez reported that after 33 years he was retiring and this would be his last meeting. He thanked everyone for the support.

#### B. Board Member Reports, Requests, or Announcements:

## **MINUTES APPROVED AT THE OCTOBER 8, 2025, DRB MEETING**

Chair Rey reported that she and Boardmember Kellman had a meeting with Planning Manager Avery Stark for a discussion of whether it made sense to combine the DRB and the Planning Commission. On the discussion, it was noted there were pros and cons to that possibility and the length of the meetings, among other concerns, was noted as a potential concern.

The reasons for the suggestion to combine the two groups were also noted, as changes in state law with respect to required housing review, efficiencies, streamlining the staff effort, the ability to achieve quorums, and the slow economy, among others. More discussions would follow.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 P.M. to the regular Design Review Board meeting on Wednesday, August 27, 2025.