

DESIGN REVIEW BOARD MEETING
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, RICHMOND CITY HALL
1401 Marina Way South, Richmond, CA
April 8, 2009
6:00 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS

Vacant, Chair
Diane Bloom
Eileen Whitty

Don Woodrow, Vice Chair
Andrew Butt
Mike Woldemar

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Vice Chair Woodrow, Board Members Butt, Whitty and Woldemar

Absent: Bloom

INTRODUCTIONS

Staff Present: Hector Rojas, Hector Lopez, Lina Velasco, Jonelyn Whales and Carlos Privat

APPROVAL OF MINUTES - None

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Vice Chair Woodrow proposed moving up Item 5a in order to elect the new Board Officers.

5. Reports of Officers, Board Members, and Staff
a. Vote and Elect New Design Review Board Offices

Boardmember Butt said the Nominating Committee arrived at a Slate of Officers, as follows: Chair Michael Woldemar and Vice Chair Eileen Whitty. There were no other nominations.

ACTION: It was M/S (Butt/Woodrow) to Elect Michael Woldemar as Chair and Eileen Whitty as Vice Chair. Vote: 3-0-1-1 (Bloom absent; Woldemar abstained).

Chair Woldemar gave an overview of the procedures for speaker registration and public hearing functions and procedures. He noted any decision approved may be appealed in writing to the City Clerk within ten (10) days, or by Monday, April 20, 2009 by 5:00 p.m. He repeated the appeal period after each affected item.

ACTION: It was M/S (Woodrow/Butt) to approve the agenda, as amended; unanimously approved.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Chair Woldemar noted Consent Calendar Items consisted of Items 2, 3 and 4. Item 4 was requested for removal (Woldemar).

ACTION: It was M/S (Whitty/Woldemar) to approve the Consent Calendar consisting of Items 2 and 3; unanimously carried.

Items Approved:

- 2. PLN 08-040 – Gonzalez Residential Addition on 26th Street** - DESIGN REVIEW PERMIT to consider a request for Design Review approval to construct a ±1,000 square foot two-story addition to the main residence located at 1414 – 26th Street (APN: 527-100-014) and establishing a ±640 square foot second unit. SFR-3 (Single-Family Low Density Residential) Zoning District. Ricardo Gonzalez, owner; Miguel Tello, applicant. Staff Contact: Hector Lopez. Tentative Recommendation: Withdrawal.
- 3. PLN 09-038 – Carpenter Residential Basement Conversion on Santa Fe Avenue** - DESIGN REVIEW PERMIT to consider a request to raise the existing residence located at 302 Santa Fe Avenue (APN: 558-162-007), a contributing structure to the Point Richmond National Register Historic District, for the purpose of converting the basement into living space. MFR-1(Multi-Family Residential) Zoning District. James Carpenter, owner/applicant. Staff Contact: Lina Velasco. Tentative Recommendation: Conditional Approval.

Items Heard:

- 1. PLN 09-039 – Castle Principles LLC, Country Club Villas at Atlas Road & Horizon Drive** - Design Review Permit for architectural changes to Country Club Villas Plan 6, reducing the residence from three (3) stories to two (2) stories. The project is located near the intersection of Atlas Road and Horizon Drive in the Country Club Villas Subdivision (APNs: 405-660-012 thru 405-660-021 and 405-660-113 thru 405-660-134). PA (Planned Area) Zoning District. Castle Principles LLC, owner; Dan Boatwright of Castle Companies, applicant. Staff Contact: Hector Rojas. Tentative Recommendation: Conditional Approval.

Hector Rojas gave the staff report and a brief description of the request. He said the item was continued from the March 25th meeting to afford the applicant time to meet with the homeowners of the Country Club Villas subdivision who had specific objections. An alternative was discussed wherein Plan 6 would move forward with the requested change, but the Plan 2 would be built according to the original plans approved in 2003 by the City Council. The applicant and homeowners are supportive of this alternative.

Mr. Rojas said the site plan in Exhibit A shows 8 lots affected by the proposed change; a street elevation is contained in Exhibit C. He briefly described the subdivision home plans and said staff recommends the Board adopt recommended findings and statement of facts subject to conditions of approval in the report.

The public hearing was opened.

Dan Boatwright, Castle Companies, echoed Mr. Rojas' comments, said they met last Saturday with homeowners, there were no remaining comments or concerns and as requested, they also put together a plan that shows how the two- and three-story homes interacted.

Boardmember Butt said it looks as though substantial changes had been made and asked for an explanation of those changes. Mr. Boatwright said in essence, they are not changing the Plan 6 to Plan 2 home designs. They met with 12-15 homeowners on Saturday morning on site and no one voiced concerns with the revised plan.

There were no public comments.

Mr. Rojas gave staff summation and recommendation for approval and Boardmembers voiced their support for approval.

The public hearing was closed.

ACTION: It was M/S (Whitty/Woodrow) to approve PLN 09-039 with the four findings and staff's recommended five conditions, and added exhibits; unanimously approved.

4. PLN 09-050 – Reconstruction of Fire Station 66 on Clinton Avenue - STUDY SESSION to discuss and present preliminary designs for the proposed reconstruction of Fire Station 66 and the Clinton Playlot located at 4100 Clinton Avenue (APN:518-061-001). PC (Public & Civic Uses) and CRR (Community and Regional Recreational) Zoning Districts. It is anticipated that the project will be exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines § 15302. City of Richmond, owner; Fire Department, applicant. Staff Contact: Lina Velasco. Tentative Recommendation: No Action – Comments Only.

Lina Velasco gave a brief description of the plans, stating the Fire Department received CIP funding for upgrades and reconstruction of Fire Station 66. To determine whether or not the structure should be demolished, staff conducted a historic evaluation which disclosed it was not eligible for either the local, statewide or national register. She said the building would be torn down in phases so that it can remain in operation during reconstruction. The property is zoned differently; one portion housing the fire station is zoned PC and the Clinton Play Lot is zoned CRR. Therefore, as part of the application in the future, a CUP will be required to allow the public safety building to encroach upon the park space.

The Fire, Public Works, and Parks and Recreation Department have worked together to design a site plan that meets both the fire department's and neighborhood's needs.

Chair Woldemar confirmed with Ms. Velasco that the item would also need to be reviewed and approved by the Planning Commission and onto the City Council.

_____ Bermudas, Public Works Director, said he was in charge of the project and worked with the Fire Department to replace their existing fire station with a more comfortable station. He introduced Fire Captain Dan Pettit to discuss the project.

Captain Pettit discussed the station as being built in 1942, it did not meet any relevant historic designation, and the main reason for reconstruction is due to the fact that the department has outgrown it. He discussed clearance and the need for more space, the non-gender specific bathroom and dorm rooms, said they worked closely with the community and neighborhood councils to have the building blend in while maintaining the utility of it being a fire station. They received approvals from both neighborhood councils and full support of the community.

Boardmember Woodrow questioned if this was one of many fire station reconstructions, and Captain Pettit said no, but there is one other fire station which may be considered for reconstruction in the future. He noted their station is kept small; they are on .42 acres and the building can be expanded.

Boardmember Woodrow said only one fire station in town is earthquake safe and he felt the doors were the most crucial part during an earthquake. Captain Pettit explained that the apparatus doors are bi-fold doors and open sideways, are heavier weight and open faster which

increases response times. He confirmed the doors were powered and also have a backup generator to operate them.

Boardmember Butt questioned whether the building would have to have higher seismic design requirements due to it being a public safety building. Captain Pettit said the architect could further elaborate on this.

Monan Shah, architect, Shah Kawasaki Architects, said they are early in the process of designing the station and schematic design, have not gotten into a mature level of detail and wanted to hold the study session in order to receive as much feedback as possible. He described the station's square footage, site location, existing residence hall which will remain in operation while the apparatus bay is rebuilt, have it operational and then take down the residences and install a parking lot for the department. To the east is the tot lot for the neighborhood. He presented photographs of the existing facility, Clinton Park, a brick veneer apparatus bay, and said they tried to blend in with the Craftsman style homes in the neighborhood. He presented the elevation on Clinton Avenue, a front porch entry, said the building is a LEED building project, its doors have similarly been installed at the Berkeley Fire Station, and said they want the apparatus bay to have a civic presence and scale down as it approaches Clinton Avenue.

Jackie Keller, Keller Mitchell Landscape Design, discussed the fire station theme on the east side, two spring toys, a web climber simulating ladders, the play areas are connected by a figure 8 trike path with two benches, and the entire area is enclosed by a four-foot high vertical metal picket fence so children and parents can be safely contained. They worked with Tony Norris on the planting plan; they decided that in light of the drought, they would eliminate the lawn complete. Their plant materials list includes drought-resistance, Mediterranean, low-water use and fire resistant materials. They will group plants together than have similar watering requirements, called higher zoning, and their goal for the fire station is to be a good neighbor and good example of what can be planted as fire resistant plants and also educate people about the drainage challenges. There are no storm drain pipes along Clinton, Wilson or 41st Street and their goal is to take roof drains off of the roof and put them into bio-swailes where ornamental grasses would be planted.

Ms. Keller said along Clinton Avenue's four foot wide lawn area, they are proposing decomposed granite which is more permeable. On the west side of the fire station, there is a 6 foot high fence that surrounds a small parking area and a barbeque area. They will soften the fenced area with edible plants; lemon, lime and orange trees, as well as a 4-foot high hedge. They are proposing drip irrigation in confined areas and spider bubbles for all other areas. They will also be researching LED lights for site lighting, and Mr. Norris had found LED, solar-powered lights, which they will look into. She presented bike racks, spring toy, web climber, LED and two recycled plastic benches in the tot lot area.

Vice Chair Whitty said she visited the neighborhood, observed the environment and home styles, and felt the architecture blended well with the new building. She referred to parking for the tot lot and questioned what would occur in an emergency fire situation. Mr. Shah said there are several stations that have tot lots and he believed that parking and movement might be affected, but it would depend upon which way the call is. Although, the set up is the same as the existing station and it has never presented any problems, and assured her that they are cautious about fire apparatus and movement.

Vice Chair Whitty referred to fencing around the patio area and questioned if the color red was considered. She also referred to the entrance and said the exposed white beams are missing from the entrance which she felt would add something. She believed that the brick columns, if

taller, would draw the eye up and could be accomplished such that the tops end where the red door window bottoms align.

Mr. Shah said the beams do occur in the entryway but are colored brown and have a more unified reading. He said it would also occur at the tops of the columns, and detailing would be more subtle moving toward the top of the column.

Vice Chair Whitty supported this and asked the applicant to consider increasing the height of the brick column so that they end closer to the bottom of the glass of the red doors.

Boardmember Butt said in looking at the building and landscape design and knowing it is early in the design process, he did not see anything that lent itself toward sustainable design, so he was glad to hear the lawn was removed and there would be permeable paving. He felt it would be helpful to identify a list of sustainable design measures and goals for the LEED Silver achievement. He said the only other thing to consider would be more permeable paving, either impervious concrete or asphalt paving or pavers in some of the other hardscape areas. Regarding design, he appreciates the applicant going back and looking at some of the older fire stations, such as the photo shown on the non-Pt. Richmond one. He really likes the doors, confirmed it was full brick veneer, said he would look at more detailing at some of the old fire stations, but was not sure the brick goes well with some of the detailing of the old fire station look such as the way the brick water table hits the stucco and he suggested a stone cap.

He liked the facades but some of the other sides have a vast stucco wall which he believed was not very interesting. In looking more closely, the way the roof fascia transitions into another brick pattern and a trim band to the top of the wall, which then transitions into the soffit need to be reviewed as to how it all works out.

Boardmember Butt suggested seeing more windows for natural light and controls, PV on the roof or possibly doing an integrated shingle with PV, and he said it looks like the main front and rear entry are covered from weather but with the overhang being so minimal and so high, some of the other exterior doors are not shielded from weather. Functionally, the patio is off to one side, there is parking, and the closest door from the parking and patio is not close, and Mr. Shah said there is a slider in the dining room area which was difficult to see on the plans.

Mr. Shah said in terms of natural light, they are trying to balance the heat gain, but each bedroom has a 4x4 window and the day room and dining room have a lot of natural light that comes in. If budget allows, they could add some skylights over the kitchen. In the high bays, they have some windows as well as the installation of glass panes on the actual front doors. Similarly, there is a large opening in the exercise room for light. In terms of LEED goals, Mr. Shah said they have a lot of recycled content for interior finishes, they have done a checklist early on and he agreed to return with this next time to discuss it.

Boardmember Woodrow said most of his questions had been answered. The fire station is 900 feet away from the Hayward fault and the most vulnerable of any other fire station. He asked that the applicant use the fault map that shows it goes right up I-80. Doors are 14' and high enough so that they can accommodate the department's tallest truck. He confirmed that the power, cable and telephone come in overhead with gas and sewer underground, and bio-swales will be used due to there being no storm outlet.

Boardmember Woodrow questioned why there was a 6-7 foot fence, and Mr. Shah said the fencing provides a private security area for firefighters to park their personal vehicles, privacy for use of the BBQ area, and the idea is to green the area more than the rendering shows. Boardmember Woodrow asked the applicant to re-think the 6 foot fence, but Mr. Shah said part of the issue is privacy as well as security and he noted some vehicles have been broken into.

Boardmember Woodrow referred to photographs of the doors and he asked that they be a singular plan to look like a true fire hall. Secondly, he asked the applicant to do something with the window above the peak just over the doors and suggested the top be the same as the door and carry up the plan. Finally, he suggested the doorway theme be curved such that it is carried across part of the hall and so that it is clearly not a fire hall.

He confirmed with staff that the City is looking for federal stimulus funding. He questioned and confirmed that the lawn would be taken out and replaced with an irrigated planting with mulch between them, and plants would be intended to grow together.

Boardmember Woodrow questioned how easy the landscaped area was to clean, as materials sometime catch and cause litter. Ms. Keller said she did not experience trash in groundcovers at nearby residences. Boardmember Woodrow suggested the applicant contact Jim Jankins of the North and East Homeowners Council, to set up a citizens group to take on the job of keeping the areas clean.

Chair Woldemar referred to the site plan and said it has a very residential scale, fits the neighborhood, and he believed the plan needed more details. He said the fence on the west and north side appears to be 5 feet back from the property line and he suggested that staff determine whether this is a rear, front or corner lot area, as the code does not allow for 6 foot high fences 5 feet from the property line. The fence as illustrated does not also have a lot to do with the building and he asked that it be more compatible.

The building will also have a lot of roof vents and recommended all of these occur on the south side or on the west side of the roof slopes and as least visible from the public's side as possible.

Important will be the design and screening of the refuse area, particularly as it relates to the day room and dining room. He believes most jurisdictions are requiring refuse areas be covered as well. Also, the design character of the trellis will be important in that area. He suggested screening further inside toward the building to create some privacy so firefighters are not able to see their vehicles from the dining room. He suggested that the shapes of the trees and shrubs be clearly delineated on the plans.

He noted that the illustrative plan is not the same as the line drawings in the submittal, stating there is a walkway on the south side of the property leading out to 41st Street which is not on the illustrative drawings. He also suggested there be a man gate on that side. He referred to the fence design along the south side and said the area will need to be landscaped and the fence design will need to be taken into consideration. Mr. Shah said their idea is to make it a 6 foot tall CMU wall for sound and to keep the noise from traveling to the school; speakers will be mounted on the wall and will face the building.

Chair Woldemar also referred to the generator and noise impacts from the school while in session. He was interested in the design of the generator, fuel, and location of fueling. The building will also have a significant rooftop exhaust system for the equipment bays and said the equipment should get screened properly and address noise concerns to the school. Mr. Shah said the exhaust fans will be located in the attic above the apparatus bay and there will only be a south side vent. As much equipment will be located in the building or within the attic.

Chair Woldemar said there are a number of trees on the site and asked to know how many will be retained.

Tony Norris, Parks and Recreation Director, said trees would need to be remove;, the design team evaluated one oak tree's position and expansion of the station and found it cannot be

saved. Given the damage which would be done to the roots and the raising of its canopy to be lifted up over the equipment bays, the tree would most likely die and he has condemned the trees for the expansion. Because of the phased development, it was necessary to develop it in this footprint.

Chair Woldemar suggested that staff look for a logical tree replacement as the project moves forward. He questioned where the new electrical transformer was located and how was it going to be screened, as well as the HVAC pad mounted compressor and how it would be screened. He said the 3-D rendering shows brick running along the edge of the northeast corner of the equipment bay building. The line drawing shows something different on that side and he asked for more detail on how that turns the corner. He felt Boardmember Butt's discussion regarding the old fire station's water table at the spring point of the doors was a nice idea and he felt the brick might look better going up that high with stucco above.

Chair Woldemar said the roof is labeled as composite and he suggested it be 40 or 50 year material. The C-3 drainage details need to be worked out, and planting should clearly set an example from a public building standpoint. He said there is also a new Title 24 energy law coming this Fall which may need to be adhered to.

He suggested permeable pavement be designed for the parking lot and in the driveway to the equipment bay. The window above the doors is a window into an attic space unless the ceiling is vaulted and he asked that it be made functional to get light back down into the building.

Chair Woldemar asked that the minutes be transcribed as soon as possible for the applicant and asked the applicant to make note of the submittal materials required in a real application. Other than that, he believed the project would fit well with the neighborhood.

Boardmember Butt said he was surprised not to see a fire pole or Dalmatian in any of the renderings.

Mr. Shah thanked the Board and agreed to return in another month.

5. Reports of Officers, Board Members, and Staff

Vice Chair Whitty requested staff place the annual housing count numbers on a future item on the agenda.

Chair Woldemar noted that the DRB was scheduled for a retreat with the Planning Commission on April 17, 2009. He also attended a Green Building Ordinance Informational Meeting at the Richmond Country Club which was well-attended. He requested the Board be given a briefing on the ordinance and how it would affect the work being done by the DRB. He said included in the packet was the Rosie the Riveter National Historic General Management Plan and Environmental Assessment, which he said was interesting. Lastly, the next meeting will be held on April 22, 2009.

BROWN ACT – Public Forum – No speakers.

The Board adjourned the meeting at 7:20 p.m.