

**DESIGN REVIEW BOARD MEETING  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, RICHMOND CITY HALL  
1401 Marina Way South, Richmond, CA  
January 10, 2007  
6:00 p.m.**

**BOARD MEMBERS**

Eileen Whitty, Chair  
Jonathan Livingston  
Don Woodrow  
Robert Avellar

Michael Woldemar, Vice Chair  
Ted J. Smith  
Diane Bloom

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Chair Whitty, Vice Chair Woldemar, Board members Bloom, Livingston, Smith and Woodrow

**Absent:** Avellar

**INTRODUCTIONS**

**Staff Present:** Lamont Thompson, Richard Mitchell, Lina Velasco, Joe Light and Carlos Privat

**MINUTES FOR APPROVAL** - None

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Vice Chair Woldemar** noted that staff's recommendation for Item 3 was to hold it over until February 28<sup>th</sup> or to approve it with conditions, and requested it be heard.

**Mr. Thompson** requested holding over Item 8 due to receipt of an e-mail requesting such from the applicant.

**ACTION: It was M/S (Whitty/Woodrow) to hold over Item 8 to February 28, 2007; unanimously approved.**

**ACTION: It was M/S (Woldemar/Woodrow) that Items 2, 4 and 6 be added to the Consent Calendar; which carried by unanimous voice vote.**

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

**Chair Whitty** noted the Consent Calendar consisted of Item 2, 4, 6, 7 and 8. There were no items requested for removal.

**ACTION: It was M/S (Whitty/Woldemar) to approve the Consent Calendar Items 2, 4, 6, 7 and 8; unanimously approved.**

**Chair Whitty** gave an overview of the Consent Calendar, procedures for speaker registration and public hearing functions and procedures. She said any decision approved may be appealed in writing to the City Clerk within ten (10) days by 5:00 p.m., or Monday, January 22, 2007.

**Consent Items Approved:**

2. **DR 1102921 – Addition to Single-Family Residence on Alameda Avenue - PUBLIC HEARING** to consider a request for Design Review approval to construct a two-story room addition at the rear of the existing residence that would contain additional living area and a ±630 square foot second dwelling unit located at 5607 Alameda Avenue (APN: 509-160-017). The applicant proposes interior modifications and reconfiguration of the existing garage. SFR-3, Single Family Low Density Residential Zoning District. Yusuf Taj, owner; Mohammed Subhani, applicant. Tentative Recommendation: Hold Over To 3/14/2007.
4. **DR 1103365 – Two-Story Addition to Single-Family Dwelling on Gaynor Avenue - PUBLIC HEARING** to consider a request for Design Review approval to construct a ±935 square foot two-story addition to an existing single-family dwelling located at 2200 Gaynor Avenue (APN: 529-170-037). SFR-3, Single-Family Low Density Residential Zoning District. Mark Bucciarelli, owner/applicant. Tentative Recommendation: Conditional Approval.
6. **DR 1103240 – Second-Story Addition above Garage on Rheem Avenue - PUBLIC HEARING** to consider a request for Design Review approval to allow a ±275 square foot second-story addition built over the garage without permits to remain with slight modifications. Some of the proposed modifications include matching exterior materials and colors, and removing the front balcony which will bring the structure into conformance with the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance. The dwelling is located at 3033 Rheem Avenue (APN: 526-220-014). SFR-3, Single Family: Low-Density Residential District. Blanca Baeza, owner/applicant. Tentative Recommendation: Conditional Approval.
7. **DR 1103385 – Addition to Single-Story Residence and Accessory Structure on Cutting Blvd - PUBLIC HEARING** to consider a request for Design Review approval to construct a ±881 square foot addition onto an existing single-story residence located at 2716 & 2716 ½ Cutting Boulevard (APN: 549-150-006). The existing residence will be elevated to become the second floor and the addition will be the new ground floor. The project also includes a new detached 2-car garage and a ±187 square foot addition to the existing detached second dwelling unit. MFR-2, Multi-Family Medium Density Residential Zoning District. Jake Sloan, owner; Charles Brown, applicant. Tentative Recommendation: Conditional Approval.
8. **DR 1103246 – 16 Building Trade Studio Live/Work Units on Ohio Avenue - PUBLIC HEARING** to consider a request for Design Review approval of 16 live/work units, 27 parking spaces, a driveway, and landscaping on five parcels (Parcels A through E) totaling ±46,250 square feet. Parcel A is located on the northwest corner of Ohio Avenue and Eighth Street (APN: 538-410-021), and the contiguous Parcels B, C, D, and E are located on the north side of Ohio Avenue between Eighth Street and Harbour Way South (APNs: 538-420-004, 538-420-022, 538-420-001, and 538-430-018). Light Industrial (Knox Cutting Specific Plan) Zoning District. Raymond Knox, Helga Gruber, Kathy Rogers, Alexa Wilkie, Beth Gerstein, Karen Bowen, Tom Lawrence, Karen Sprague, and Kyle and Natalia Reicher, owners; Kathryn A. Rogers, applicant. Tentative Recommendation: Hold Over to February 28, 2007.

**Items Discussed:**

3. **DR 1102720 – Two-Story Addition to Single-Family Dwelling on McLaughlin Street - PUBLIC HEARING** to consider a request for Design Review approval to construct a ±1,152

square foot two-story addition to an existing single-family dwelling located at 673 McLaughlin Street (APN: 519-010-008). SFR-3, Single-Family Low Density Residential Zoning District. Ella McKinniss, owner; Tammy Jones, applicant. Tentative Recommendation: Hold Over To 2/28/2007.

**Chair Whitty** noted there were no questions of staff, said the public hearing was open and asked for the applicant to present the project.

Contractor for the applicant, discussed minor changes made to the project to add an area for the owner's grandmother to move in, and noted feedback was received from staff and the DRB subcommittee.

**Chair Whitty** confirmed the project was heard before the neighborhood council, with their support.

**Vice Chair Woldemar** confirmed that the applicant understood and agreed with all conditions proposed, and asked if the amount of light and air necessary for the existing kitchen and living room was calculated. The contractor said he was only involved with the addition and had the plans drawn by another party.

**Vice Chair Woldemar** referred to the roof pitch of the existing house, said the drawings reflect it to be significantly greater than what is there, and therefore, the front elevation would be significantly different than what was proposed. He asked that the applicant provide a sketch of the new roof configuration; suggested that the new addition as an attic project forward to the ridgeline over the existing house; recommended off-setting the addition's right elevation by about 2 feet which would help break up the large scale of the addition; and he provided sketches to the applicant. He also requested that drawings be provided for the garage and asked the applicant to ensure there was a firewall rating.

There were no public speakers, and the public hearing was closed.

**ACTION: It was M/S (Woldemar/Livingston) to approve DR 1102720 based on staff's recommended 4 findings, based on staff's recommended conditions B, items 1-10, plus the following additional conditions; that they are based on sketched pages marked up by Vice Chair Woldemar and passed onto the staff for transmittal to the applicant, which include; 11) that the rear addition be moved 2 feet to the south of its current location off-setting from the main building; 12) that the drawings be more accurately prepared representing the existing slope of the roof; 13) that the second floor walls of the new addition extend over the existing roof to a point equal to the ridge of the existing roof and that the new roof extend also along that distance; 14) that windows or false windows be added to the front façade of the second story of the addition facing the street; 15) that the roof of the covered porch be modified to be a simple shed roof matching that which is indicated on the rear of the house; unanimously approved.**

**5. DR 1103272 – Construct Mixed-Use Buildings on Macdonald Avenue - PUBLIC HEARING** to consider a request for Design Review approval to construct a three-story, 35-foot high mixed-use development consisting of 27 low-income residential units, common rooms, and a ±9,575 square foot medical office building on a ±38,175 square foot parcel located at 100 & 180 Macdonald Avenue (APN: 538-181-001). C-1, Neighborhood Commercial and SFR-3, Single-Family Low Density Residential Zoning Districts. Community Housing and Development Corp, owner; Jacobson Silverstein, Winslow Degenhardt Architects, applicant. Tentative Recommendation: Recommend Conditional Approval To Planning Commission.

**Chair Whitty** gave a brief description of the proposal, said the public hearing was still open, said the project requires a conditional use permit for parking and a variance, and noted the Board's subcommittee comprised of Lamont Thompson and Boardmembers Livingston and Avellar, with Vice Chair Woldemar also separately reviewing the project.

**Vice Chair Woldemar** asked the applicant for parking space sizes and back out distances. He noted ordinance requirements were 9'x18.5' and a 25' back out, and noted there were inconsistencies with information contained within the zoning ordinance on the website. He questioned whether the C-3 elements were dealt with and **Mr. Light** said they were exempt based on the application request.

Joanna Griffith, Community Housing Development Corporation introduced Barbara Winslow.

Barbara Winslow, applicant, noted the site is provided with 9 foot wide spaces that are 18 feet deep with a 25 foot back up area. There is a 2 foot overhang on the parking strip side as currently designed, which they have been told was acceptable. She said if 6 inches needed to be added to the 18 foot spaces, they would need to reduce the planting strip by one foot to comply.

**Vice Chair Woldemar** felt the discrepancies in the plans needed to be revised, as on the residential side there were 16 foot dimensions, some 2 foot overhangs on the south side, and a 24 foot back out distance. He also pointed out that on Sheet A-1, the two standard sized spaces on the drawings leading from the long arm from the "L" into the short arm of the "L" on housing plans, there were two trees drawn within that 20 foot dimension. Once the parking spaces were installed properly, there was no room for the trees.

**Vice Chair Woldemar** confirmed the commercial office building would have air conditioning and the mechanical equipment was located on the roof, was screened, 4 feet tall, and solar panels were proposed to be included in the project. He noted chain link fences were proposed around the property, and he asked that something different be proposed.

**Vice Chair Woldemar** felt the project had come a long way, thanked the applicant, staff and members of the subcommittee, and felt the project would fit well in the area, given minor revisions.

**Boardmember Livingston** voiced concerns that there were no control joints in the stucco and suggested including a primus be included on top of the brown coat to mitigate cracking of the stucco. He further explained the primus material which is put on prior to the color coating.

**Vice Chair Woldemar** suggested doing some additional horizontal extensions on some of the longer elements.

There were no public comments, and the public hearing was closed.

**ACTION: It was M/S (Livingston/Smith) to recommend conditional approval to the Planning Commission of DR 1102841 based on staff's recommended 4 findings, 5 conditional use findings, staff's 7 recommended conditions, with additional conditions that 8) that in lieu of control joints that elastomeric paint be used consistent with the colored drawings and color board dated December 26, 2006; 9) that parking spaces be converted to conform with the current Richmond Zoning Ordinance (9x18.5 with 25 foot back out); 10) that the chain link fence noted on Sheet A-1 be changed to conform to detail on Sheet A-8; unanimously approved.**

## **Public Forum – Brown Act - None**

### **BOARD BUSINESS**

#### **9. Reports of Officers, Board Members, and Staff**

- a) Discussion of the January 24 and February 14, 2007 meetings cancellations and proposed Special Design Review Board meeting on January 31, 2007.
- b) Proposed Design Review Process Modifications – Q&A with Richard Mitchell

**Mr. Mitchell** noted a report was submitted on May 9<sup>th</sup> which offered a series of design review modification options. He said there Council direction was to come back with some recommendations of modifications to the design review process on or before March 31, and he provided copies of the staff report which included those options in a matrix.

He noted objectives as: 1) get better information to the DRB, feeling there were too many projects that were not ready for review and approval at meetings; 2) get conditional approval from the Planning Commission on the larger scale projects so that the applicant/designer can invest more time in developing a design, which tended not to occur now. He noted staff would perform a 10-city survey of cities within Richmond's size and their design review processes; 3) establishing the role of a City Architect(s), which currently was handled by a Board subcommittee; 4) improve how landscape details and plans are handled prior to the project going to a DRB hearing; and 5) modification on parking space sizes for urban and in-fill projects and flexibility for the amount and size of spaces.

**Vice Chair Woldemar** and Mr. Mitchell discussed the Council's intent to review the current process and it was noted there was no agreement that the Planning Commission and Design Review Board should be merged. Included as an option could be the incorporation of review by a subcommittee or City Architect. Given the volume of planning work, **Mr. Mitchell** felt a good option would be for the Planning Commission to meet twice monthly.

**Vice Chair Woldemar** questioned who the City Council liaison was and said that person was supposed to be attending the DRB meetings. He discussed the City's institutional memory and suggested better communication occur between the two bodies.

**Chair Whitty** felt the Board was also reviewing a lot of remodels which required a lot of time and she felt they did need to continue to be heard before the Board.

**Mr. Mitchell** suggested first making people understand there are a variety of housing types and neighborhoods in Richmond and submit higher quality plans to staff that are ready for review by the DRB. He discussed current applicant processes, the time taken by staff to educate applicants about design regulations, building and materials alternatives, counter experiences, and felt an hourly City Architect rate could be established to assist applicants.

**Boardmember Livingston** suggested Mr. Mitchell find 3-4 candidates who are able to draw and who know and understand the City's future planning vision, and asked that their work be presented to the Board. He noted he personally spent a total of 24 hours working on the previous applicant's project involving hearings, review of plans, and meetings.

**Mr. Mitchell** felt many people did not understand what was needed by the City, and he felt the amount of review time would be reduced over time and further discussed examples of other cities, developer/applicant design cost constraints and complaints to the Council.

**Vice Chair Woldemar** felt the City Architect's role should never be one of approval but of professional design advice, and suggested architectural guidelines be developed which would be easier to translate to applicants.

**Vice Chair Whitty** felt that all neighborhood councils should also be involved in the process.

**Boardmember Bloom** suggested a video be made and placed on the City's website about the design review process, felt it was timely and would be educational for applicants. She also suggested a video with headphones be placed in the planning lobby where applicants could see and listen to city requirements, planning and design criteria so they have the knowledge ahead of meeting with staff on their project.

**Mr. Mitchell** felt this was an excellent suggestion, **Boardmember Bloom** felt there were local resources for filming such a video, and Boardmembers made various suggestions of subject areas.

**Boardmember Woodrow** said he was originally concerned that the process would inevitably cut off the need for the Design Review Board but was pleased to hear this was not the case. He also referred to Item 8's staff report, noting page 1 indicated under FAR that the project would require an exception to the FAR, as well as at the end of the paragraph regarding lot size. However, on the following page, the term "variance" was used. **Mr. Thompson** said staff does not need to make specific findings like a variance for hardships, said it deals more with equity and bringing them up to standards of what other neighbors have.

**City Attorney Renfro** discussed the Knox Cutting Specific Plan's requirements and wording use of "exception", and said if there is a requirement that deviates from the zoning ordinance, the term "variance" is used because it is a greater exception. **Vice Chair Woldemar** felt certain requirements were confusing and did not make sense and **Boardmember Bloom** suggested writing easier comments for ease of understanding by applicants.

**Mr. Mitchell** asked that additional suggestions be submitted to staff and staff would revise the list of amendments and present it to the Council for action, denial, further modification or further review and consideration. He further discussed development and housing trends, developer/applicant commitment versus developer/applicant ignorance of City requirements.

**Mr. Mitchell** provided an update on the General Plan amendment process, said it was made up of a Technical Advisory Committee and a General Plan Advisory Committee, and said they were currently at the community outreach level, the City's website contains information available for public comment, said there would be a joint planning effort held between Richmond and El Cerrito on San Pablo Avenue between Macdonald and Central, reported the General Plan consultant assisted the City in getting a \$250,000 grant for a Health Element of the General Plan, said the next set of community meetings would be held in the Spring, and the process would go on for awhile.

**Mr. Mitchell** further described the need for a health element and his planned attendance at a recent conference which would look at toxins and how to design communities that would encourage people to walk places rather than to drive.

**Vice Chair Woldemar** requested a future agenda item that the DRB receive periodic City updates and that an item on the DRB agenda be placed in the future called "Future Events". He felt there were many issues the Board should be kept up to date on, requested that the DRB receive City RFP's, and also asked for an explanation of the relationship of the Design Review Board to the Planning Department to the Redevelopment Agency and felt the working process needed refinement.

**Boardmember Bloom** asked Mr. Mitchell to request a Council liaison person be assigned and attend meetings. **Boardmember Livingston** recommended that items discussed tonight be formalized and be placed in a policy resolution for the DRB.

**Mr. Mitchell** referred to the matrix and “Projects on property controlled by the City or using City or RDA funds”, and said the recommended modification would be City and Agency and departments could increase the level of pre-proposal review. He felt there were problems in this process and felt this might cost the City money as the design would need to be done in-house.

**Boardmember Woodrow** noted the DRB would attend a green building conference, and confirmed the City did not have a current ordinance dealing with green building. **Mr. Mitchell** said the subject was of greater urgency and said the Council gave direction to staff to develop a series of green ordinances. He said one example had to do with fireplaces and the City’s adoption of a fireplace ordinance. New green items included items such as the application of solar and recycling. A series of conditions and standards would need to be developed for green design and reviewed at the DRB level and then they would be brought to the Council; however, he said staff wants to ensure they are consistent and how they apply to Richmond.

**Vice Chair Woldemar** noted 3 Boardmember terms would soon be expiring and he asked staff to work on identifying potential applicants.

---

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.