

**CITY OF SONOMA
DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
May 21, 2013
Community Meeting Room, 177 First Street West**

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Anderson called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

ROLL CALL: **Present:** Comms. Anderson, Barnett, McDonald, Tippell,
Absent: Comms. Randolph, Baptista
Others Present: Associate Planner Atkins

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC: None.

COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSION: None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Comm. Tippell made a motion to approve the minutes of March 19, 2013, as submitted. Comm. Barnett seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously, McDonald abstaining, Baptista and Randolph absent.

Comm. McDonald made a motion to approve the minutes of March 26, 2013, with the minor changes noted. Comm. Tippell seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously, Anderson abstaining, Baptista and Randolph absent.

Comm. Barnett made a motion to approve the minutes of April 16, 2013, as submitted. Comm. McDonald seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously, Baptista and Randolph absent.

CORRESPONDENCE: Late mail for Item #2.

ITEM #1 – CONTINUED DESIGN REVIEW: Consideration of new building colors, a lighting plan, and a landscape plan for a restaurant located at 137-139 East Napa Street. Applicant: Sam Turner.

Associate Planner Atkins presented staff's report.

Comm. McDonald asked whether the historic concrete curb at the front of the property was going to be removed or will remain as part of the landscape plan.

Chair Anderson opened the public hearing.

Sam Turner, applicant, was present to discuss the application. He noted that the comments from the last meeting were taken into consideration and hopefully the concerns of the Commission have been adequately and thoughtfully addressed. With

regard to the color palette, they have returned with a new scheme fitting for the time period and type of structure. He provided some photos to Associate Planner Atkins of historic structures in the area that exhibit a similar color palette, such as Hop Monk, which she displayed for the Commission. The new lighting plan is more cohesive and not such a hodge-podge. At this time, he does not know the intention of the front area of the property. The concrete curb out front is to be removed, as it is in a state of disrepair, and a boxwood hedge will take its place.

Comm. McDonald asked about the detail of the fence and trellis. Mr. Turner stated there will be a subtle framework, with plantings to define the different areas. Comm. McDonald asked if there was a particular reason for the seven-foot-tall trellis structure separating the business from the driveway. Mr. Turner noted the intent is to create a confined, intimate setting. The feeling of the division can be modulated by trimming the vines on the fence. Comm. McDonald questioned whether this was approved by the Public Works Department, as it could block the driveway view and it would be a challenge to see traffic from the west due to parked cars.

John Bonnoitt is the owner of 141-145 East Napa, directly to the east of subject property. He thinks it is a very nice plan, but has serious concerns about the seven-foot fence. It is already difficult to exit onto Napa Street, as there is heavy pedestrian traffic. He feels there is no reason to block the view with a hedge and fence. From the perspective of his tenants who use the driveway, this would be a very significant increased hazard potential. He would ask that the Commission require that the first 20 feet of fence be no more than 36" high and the hedge on the frontage be only 36" high. These would be small concessions to the plan and greatly enhance the safety of people using that driveway.

Patricia Cullinen, citizen, noted that this property is a contributor to the Plaza National Register District, and was designated as such in 1974. She suggested maintaining the residential look, and concurred with Mr. Bonnoit with regard to the hedge and fence.

Chair Anderson closed the public hearing.

Comm. Tippell stated this is a vast improvement of the color scheme originally submitted. She likes the landscape plan very much, but the olive trees seem disconnected with the style of the Victorian structure and do not seem thematically correct.

Comm. McDonald noted that while he was not present at the previous meeting regarding this project, the colors and lighting being proposed tonight seem well thought out and tasteful. He noted that the majority of Victorians are painted white, and the proposed colors may be more Craftsman in nature, but do not conflict with the nature of the structure. He has concerns with the landscape plan. As this was originally a residential structure, he suggested going back and looking at the historic context of the building to the downtown and streetscape. He feels the seven-foot screen would block and hinder the pedestrian experience. He would not support removal of the low-rise concrete separation due to its historic context with the original landscape or the location of the boxwood hedge against the sidewalk, as it creates a visual/defensive barrier. With respect to the olive trees, he suggested an olive tree be featured at the front door, which would be more balanced and in keeping with a symmetrical Victorian

garden. He is hoping the applicant will propose a 36" hedge dropping at the street and also separating the house from the driveway.

Comm. Barnett thanked the applicant for the excellent presentation and noted that the colors are a vast improvement and within the range of acceptability. In general, he concurs with the opinions of Comms. Tippell and McDonald. With regard to the front area, while it is private property, he feels it is a contributing resource to this part of town and viewing the house from the street is important from the streetscape. He could not support the landscape plan, as he has a general problem with the screening and feels the landscape plan could better complement the building and area. He agrees with Comm. Tippell regarding the olive trees and would recommend the property owner come and explain their views in this regard. He feels the historic concrete curb should be retained and incorporated into the landscape plan.

Chair Anderson thanked the applicant for a good presentation and noted the new colors are far more agreeable. He appreciates the new look, with the focal point of the gate and front door remaining for residential context. He has heard from his fellow Commissioners that there are clearly issues with the landscaping, and suggested the applicant consider lowering the element. He appreciates the historic concrete curb and would suggest the landscape plan be revised to work around it.

Chair Anderson asked Mr. Turner if the olive trees at the front elevation are of any specific significance to the owners. Mr. Turner stated the owners have olive orchards and produce olive oil. There is latitude with the front hedge. As for the east property line, the owners are not trying to create a hazard, and feel strongly that this scheme preserves lines of sight and the plantings can be maintained and manipulated for safety. Mr. Turner stated it is possible that a part of the concrete curb could remain.

Andie Cochrane, landscape architect, stated that as her clients make commercial olive oil, the connection to the olive trees is important to them. The hedge could be reduced from 42" to 36". She will talk to her clients about the east property line.

Chair Anderson noted that the only possible area of contention is the seven-foot-high metal fence along the east elevation. Mr. Turner asked if the issue is the fence itself or the height of the planting on the fence. He noted that the elevations don't clearly show that there's a tremendous amount of unattractive infrastructure (electric meters, etc.) at that corner of the property, and the fence would be a visual screen for that as well.

Comm. Tippell suggested moving forward with the exterior colors and the lighting plan, but continue the landscape plan to the next meeting. Comm. Barnett would encourage the property owners to attend the next meeting regarding the landscaping.

Comm. McDonald concurred. He particularly wanted to stress the preservation of the existing concrete curb and bollards and having the hedge on the other side mimic the original cross-sections of the original streetscape. He would not be supportive of anything over 36"-42" on the side property line, as that would significantly change the streetscape and the look and feel of the neighborhood. The fence is out of context with the original streetscape. It would be helpful to see details of the trellis and entrance arbor and any proposed lighting on it. He has no issue with the olive trees, although if they are not thinned up, they could completely obscure the front façade of the building.

Chair Anderson confirmed that the box hedge at the fence would be 36" and behind the existing curb. He also confirmed that it would be 42" on the east elevation, not seven feet.

Mr. Turner expressed his disappointment with the outcome of tonight's meeting. When leaving last month's meeting, all focus was on the color palette and not much mention was made of the landscape plan, so they missed an opportunity to work on that. He suggested approving what was presented tonight, with the exception of the front and east property lines, and strike a balance between the community and property owners' rights.

Comm. McDonald made a motion to approve the new paint colors and lighting plan. With regard to the landscape plan, the placement of the olive trees be approved with the condition that the applicant submit a revised landscape plan with the following recommendations:

- Provide elevation details for the trellis on the west and east elevations.
- Reduce the height of the trellis on the east elevation.
- Reduce the height of the hedge.
- Provide elevation details for the arbor.
- The low-rise cement retaining wall shall remain.

Comm. Barnett seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously, Baptista and Randolph absent.

ITEM #2 – SIGN REVIEW: Consideration of design review and landscaping review for a remodeled single-family residence located at 1032 Fifth Street East. Applicant: Chris Dluzak.

Associate Planner Atkins presented staff's report.

Comm. McDonald asked if this is a planned unit development (PUD). Associate Planner Atkins said no, it is a standard four-lot subdivision. Comm. McDonald asked whether the Planning Commission had included a condition as to the number and type of tree to be used for replacements. Associate Planner Atkins stated the Tree Committee has reviewed the arborist report for the entire site and approved removal of some trees, but not others. There will be a replacement ratio of 2:1. Staff will track to ensure this condition is adhered to.

Chair Anderson opened the public hearing.

Chris Dluzak, applicant, was present to discuss the application and presented color and material boards. He stated the existing house won't fit in with the new residences proposed he had solicited comments from adjacent neighbors.

Bob Felder, who lives across the street from this project, stated that no one had talked to the neighbors directly across the street about it. He suggested the Commission pay

particular attention to the design so it fits in with the neighborhood. He noted there is no curb, gutter, sidewalk, or driveway leading into the site.

Mr. Dluzak apologized to Mr. Felder for not including the neighbors across the street from the project. He noted the street hasn't been finished because PG&E just got the plans done last week.

Comm. McDonald asked if there was a utility or road plan for this project submitted to the Public Works Department. Mr. Dluzak said yes, and it has already been approved. Comm. McDonald asked if a comprehensive system for fencing is being proposed, or if the existing fencing will remain. Mr. Dluzak would like to change the fencing on both sides to six-feet of solid with one foot of lattice on top. Comm. McDonald suggested consistency with the fencing and landscaping throughout the project.

Chair Anderson noted that on the overall site plan, on the north side of the property, there is a curb/gutter/sidewalk further to the south. The subject property edge would ultimately be defined by curb/gutter/sidewalk. Mr. Dluzak stated that he expects everything to be in no later than August, at which time the street will be resealed.

Gary Balcerak, landscape architect and arborist for project, pointed out the advantage of a single developer developing all four lots. The design intent is to use the elements that would be approved as part of this project (fences, pavers, etc.) to tie the entire project together. There will be three different types of trees, and they plan on planting nine trees on Lot 2. They do not currently have permission to remove the four trees proposed.

Chair Anderson closed the public hearing.

Comm. McDonald thanked the applicant for the beautiful plan and found the material boards very helpful. He noted that the landscaping plan is in keeping with California landscaping and the types and sizes of the proposed plant materials are appropriate. He hopes the fencing and street trees throughout the subdivision will be consistent. Comms. Barnett and Tippell concurred.

Comm. McDonald made a motion to approve the site plan and landscaping for Site 2 as submitted. Comm. Barnett seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously, Baptista and Randolph absent.

ITEM #3 – DEMOLITION REVIEW: Consideration of a demolition permit to demolish the buildings 50 years in age or older located on a two-acre site located at 821-845 West Spain Street. Applicants: Axia Architects/Steve Ledson.

Senior Planner Gjestland presented staff's report.

Comm. McDonald asked if the buildings are currently occupied. Senior Planner Gjesland responded that the units are currently residential rentals.

Chair Anderson opened the public hearing.

Doug Hilberman, Axia Architects, was present to discuss the application. He noted that none of this will be happening overnight. Some of the tenants in the units are employees of Mr. Ledson.

Chair Anderson closed the public hearing.

Chair Anderson commented that this is a good infill project, which is the best use of the City's limited land use resources and creates more living opportunities for workforce housing. This is one of the first steps in a long process.

Comm. Barnett concurred. He appreciated the historical reports. He would approve as submitted. Comm. Tippell concurred.

Comm. McDonald is excited for this new project and addition to the city. It will be an asset to this part of Sonoma. He is glad the existing housing will be kept as long as possible. He would support the application.

Comm. McDonald made a motion to approve the application as submitted, with the conditions typically applied to demolition permits for preservation of the structures until such time that the site plan and architectural review for the site are approved. In addition, the site should be photographed and cataloged for the Sonoma League for Historic Preservation (Cochran binders). Comm. Barnett seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously, Baptista and Randolph absent.

ISSUES UPDATE: None.

COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSION: Comm. Barnett noted that Jack-in-the-Box has many flags on the roof of their building. Associate Planner Atkins will investigate.

COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE: None.

Election of officers: Comm. McDonald nominated Comm. Tippell to be Chair. Chair Anderson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously, Baptista and Randolph absent.

Comm. McDonald nominated Comm. Barnett to be Vice Chair. Comm. Tippell seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously, Baptista and Randolph absent.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m. to the regular meeting scheduled for Tuesday, June 18, 2013.

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing minutes were duly and regularly adopted at a regular meeting of the Design Review Commission on the 18th day of June 2013.

Robin Evans, Administrative Assistant