

STRAWBERRY DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
DRAFT MEETING MINUTES
12/17/2018

The meeting was called to order at 7:35pm by Joe Sherer, Chair.

A. Members Present

Julie Brown
Rebecca Lind
Joe Sherer
Matt Williams

Members Absent- Penna Omega

B. Minutes

The board reviewed the minutes from the previous meeting on 12/3/18 prepared by Penna Omega.

BOARD COMMENTS

Spelling correction R Lind quote "precedent" in lieu of "president"
Modification of M Williams quote. Insert, "It seems that" before "Agreements were made...."

M/S *Rebecca Lind/Matt Williams* to approve minutes as amended.

Vote: Julie Brown: yes, Rebecca Lind: yes, Joe Sherer: yes, Matt Williams: yes

C. Public Comments (open time not on the agenda)

Sylvia Marino Ms. Marino expressed her gratitude to the Board for its discussion and review of procedures for approving signage at the 12/3/18 meeting. She encouraged the committee in its willingness to review procedures in public forum for the educational benefit of the community.

D. Design Review Items

Project 1: Planning Staff proposing a number of text amendments to the Development Code (Marin County Code title 22) which regulates the zoning and subdivisions in the unincorporated areas of Marin County. Among the proposed amendments will be changes to section 22.110.055 (Design Review Boards). The amendments are submitted to the Board for comments.

Project Planner: *Jeremy Tejrjian (JT)*

Note: There were fourteen members of the public in attendance to address this item.

*Joe Sherer opened public discussion by relaying a phone conversation he had with JT to clarify the intent of the proposed changes. JT noted that these changes were part of a larger group of many suggested modifications and that he did **not** see them as significant. He noted that the added language was intended to achieve consistency with language in the other two existing design review boards (Tam Valley, Kentfield). Sherer and the other SDRB members commented that the "strike outs" proposed were of the most significant impact and should receive serious attention in the discussion. They noted that language added to bring clarity and consistency to all three design review boards was likely a positive change.*

PUBLIC / NEIGHBOR COMMENTS

Riley Hurd: Representing Seminary Neighbors Association and life long resident of Strawberry. Mr. Hurd stated that the proposed edits to the county code are counter to the very Strawberry Community Plan that established the SDRB. Hurd submitted to the Board copy of 1970 Strawberry Community Plan, which established the local design review board “for all future development issues”. Hurd explained that the county has unincorporated islands scattered throughout and it was unrealistic to expect planners in San Rafael to understand those local perspectives. He noted that the SDRB had recently utilized all three of the “strike outs” suggested in its review of the Seminary property submittal and that the local community relies on the SDRB to ensure it has local representation. Mr. Hurd made note of the limited resources of the Board, but suggested that instead of limiting the scope of the input, the solution was to fully fund the important work. He stressed that the timing of the proposal is TERRIBLE and that the County should reinforce and fund the full authority of the SDRB as opposed to limiting its scope. Hurd noted planning commission meeting January 22nd of 2019 where suggested changes will be reviewed formally. He also submitted a copy of Resolution 2016-03 regarding operating procedures of the board.

Fran Corcoran: Strawberry Tomorrow board member. Stated she agrees with Hurd 100%. Strongly opposes the proposed strike outs. Emphasized the timing is horrible given the current ongoing conversations with Seminary developer. “I sit on Seminary Tomorrow committee. The SDRB’s importance is a clear benchmark for the developer which gives the community caucus representatives the standing to ensure the developer takes the community seriously.”

Kay Harris: Former SDRB member. Was “stunned” at the proposal. Ms. Harris suggested J Tejirian is either obfuscating or seriously uninformed of the role the SDRB plays in the conversation with North Coast Land Holdings (Seminary developer). Harris strongly recommended rejection of changes.

Milan Martin: Ricardo Rd resident 8 years. Asked for clarification of JT’s role at the county. Martin noted that the county logically looks to streamline services for “the greater good of the county” and that the SDRB might be considered a “pain” placing speed bumps and review delays in the workload of TJ. Martin emphasized that it was upsetting to him that the Strawberry community’s taxes are taken in by the county but that the county does not treat us with respect. Notably not the respect that both MV or Tiburon residents receive from their governments. Martin noted many neighbors share his frustration.

Sylvia Marino: Echoed all the statements made by others-notably that the “TIMING STINKS. We have 10-15 years of issues in Strawberry that should’ve come before the community and instead were passed by people at the county.” Marino noted that the people making decisions do not live in Strawberry and do not have to live with the decisions. “Jeremy Tejirian and Brian Crawford are not elected officials and do not represent Strawberry. We need SDRB to represent our interests. The county is currently ignoring multiple code violations at Seminary and our complaints go unanswered.” Marino suggested not only that language not be changed (for design review boards) but that any other proposed changes to language in the county code that weaken or impacts SDRB should be not be added.

Deirdre McCrohan: Agreed with all other statements by others. “This notice is clearly designed to strip the DRB of all its power. The SDRB gives Strawberry its voice. Tiburon incorporated because of this type of thing. Being able to turn up and have input LOCALLY where the decisions are made is so very important. The Seminary project is a perfect example of local board interpreting the local plan.” She opposes any weakening of SDRB’s power.

Chris Marino: Agrees with others. “NCLH (developer) is an aggressive resident pushing the limits of compliance in every way.” He’s deeply concerned about any bypassing of community boards where developer(s) deal with the county outside in absence of local community representation.

Bruce Corcoran: Strongly opposes proposed changes and strongly supports the jurisdiction of the SDRB. “ You are our voice.” This move is part of a larger push to strip local control. Decision makers must be accountable at a local level. Urged the SDRB to review and note all changes proposed in the 67-page submittal that affect Strawberry. Corcoran noted changes in language to: residential care facilities, inclusive housing, multi-family housing wherein parking requirements are being reduced. A change he notes that will impact all residents in Strawberry community. “The county does a terrible job enforcing its own regulations. The SDRB is the only local representation to help ensure our voice is heard. We want it to keep all its authority. Corcoran noted that he requested a copy of the Staff report that will go to Planning Commission from J Tejirian. JT noted the report is not available until January 4th but Corcoran urged SDRB to obtain and read report when issued.

Bill Foss: De Silva Island Board member and Strawberry Tomorrow board member. Seconded all statements submitted by R Hurd.

Ron Clare: Seminary Cove Association. Seconded all statements submitted by R Hurd and encouraged Hurd submit a letter to the county.

Penny Crowe: resident. “I just found out about this at 6:30pm today. I think many people do not know about this. “

Marge Calahan: 18 year resident. “Also just found out this evening.” Agreed with all statements submitted by prior speakers.

BOARD COMMENTS

Rebecca Lind: The striking proposed is most “striking”. Most of the projects we see fall within the language they are proposing to strike. These are the very duties JT described to us last year as our purview. The language added makes sense. We should reach out to the other boards to confirm they have this language. Would like to see our community plan strengthened to reflect issues such as commercial area interface, infill housing, and other issues facing the community today.

Matt Williams: I have a problem with all the strike-outs. I am ok with added clarity from inserted language. Propose all strike outs should be rejected and all additions be accepted.

Julie Brown: Strike-outs confuse public’s understanding of the role of the board and limit its ability to represent the community. I am opposed to any change that limits our ability to represent the community’s input on development. I do not have a problem with language added to achieve parity with other DRBs in the county.

Joe Sherer: The proposed changes appear to want us to focus more on the SCP work. However the Strawberry Community Plan, along with the corresponding other Community

Plans in Tam and Kentfield, are extremely out of date and don't cover many issues relevant for today's applicants. The community is clear and the board is clear, that the new language is OK but the strike-outs are not acceptable. He then asked if there is anything else we think should be added. In response, several community members and the board agreed that we should eliminate in paragraph B. the phrase "only in an advisory capacity".

ACTION:

M/S (Matt Williams / Rebecca Linda) to recommend approval of revised language below:

22.110.055 – Design Review Boards

- A. **Appointment.** Design Review Board members shall be appointed by the Board of Supervisors in compliance with State law (Government Code Sections 65900 et seq.).
- B. **Duties and authority.** The Design Review Boards shall carry out the following functions and duties:
 - 1. Advise the County about project compliance with the local Community Plan, the Countywide Plan, other specific Plans, and the Development Code;
 - 2. Make recommendations to the Agency regarding the adequacy of an application, the appropriate level of environmental review, and the relative merit of development proposals;
 - 3. Advise the County about the compliance of major Public Works Department projects with the Community Plan;
 - 4. Advise the County about amendments to the local Community Plan;
 - 5. Advise the County about Work Programs and budget items that affect the local community; and
 - 6. Perform other appropriate responsibilities assigned by the Board of Supervisors and accepted by the Design Review Board.
- C. **Meeting Rules.** The Design Review Boards shall conduct and operate its meetings in accord with adopted procedures.

Vote: Julie Brown: yes, Rebecca Lind: yes, Joe Sherer: yes, Matt Williams: yes

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05pm.

Minutes prepared by Julie Brown.