

Strawberry Design Review Board
118 E. Strawberry Drive, Mill Valley, CA 94941
Strawberry Recreation Center
January 21, 2019

SUMMARY

The meeting was called to order at 7:36 by Joe Sherer, Chair

MEMBERS PRESENT

Joe Sherer, Chair (JS)
Julie Brown (JB)
Matt Williams (MW)

MEMBERS ABSENT

Penna Omega (PO)
Rebecca Lind (RL)

OPEN TIME / PUBLIC COMMENTS

- A. No Public Comments
- B. Joe Sherer noted Planning overruled the SDRB recommendation for denial on December 7, 2018 regarding the elevated lighted signage on the side of 1 Belvedere Place.
 - a. There have been discussions between Planning and JS and have included JB as well.
 - b. There is an appeal of that ruling by 2 parties: one was filed by JS with a neighborhood group and another by a tenant at 1 Belvedere.
- C. JS also discussed our recommendations for the proposed County Code amendments from our December 17, 2018 meeting.
 - a. The County decided to withdraw their proposal for amending the code.
 - b. However, SDRB had specific recommendations for amendments and those were given specifically to Jeremy Tejirian and Tom Lai.
 - c. JS intends to go to the Planning Commission Meeting on January 28 and would welcome anyone in the public to show up as well.
 - d. JB added that those proposed amendments were memorialized in our Minutes and were posted. JS added that we had intended to have another meeting to discuss these further, but Planning had by then withdrawn their proposal, making our meeting moot.
 - e. However, JS stated that cancelling the changes were in fact NOT what the SDRB wanted – we wanted added language.
 - f. The voice of the community was heard at our December 17 meeting and JS wants it to continue to be heard.
 - g.

MINUTES

We decided to go out of order to get to the single project.

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Strawberry Recreation District - Proposed Greenwood Bay Condominium Sign

Michael Heckmann, local architect and resident at Greenwood Bay Condominiums, discussed the how most people don't know where this condominium complex is. (See below for clarification of how the property sign proposed is owned by Strawberry Rec and in fact Strawberry Recreation District is the Applicant.) Greenwood Bay Condominiums hired a design consultant to work on this sign. The existing sign and the fact that it was broken three days ago, has been ineffective, resulting in deliveries going to the wrong locations (Greenwood Bay Drive to the west and Greenwood Cove Drive to the east). They propose a new low scale, appropriate size, 52 sq. ft. sign lit by two LED up-lights. Colors are grey-green with a white graphic for the complex name with dark bronze lettering for the address information. The sign is constructed out of metal on a concrete foundation, very much similar to an existing sign in downtown Tiburon. The original design was going to be all cast concrete, but given the location on bay fill, they opted for one that is lighter. Steel posts clad by the aluminum/steel plate sign. Two up-lights are out in front to light it at night. We will ensure they are shielded so as to not affect any nearby residents or the Cove Shopping Center. They will control it.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no others present so we moved to board comments.

BOARD DISCUSSION

Initial discussion regarded the APP lighting spec sheet for a 50-watt halogen fixture with no shielding. However, MW pointed out that the drawings call for LED lights. JB wanted to understand the color temperature and the CRI. APP stated they would be in the warm range.

JS:

1. JS would prefer a downlight in lieu of an up-light. JS brought an LED down-light spec sheet from the same manufacturer, Lumiere, as an example. JS also is not convinced that an up-light will not be seen from surrounding properties.
2. Higher CRI will help with how the grey-green is perceived.
3. JB notes that we aren't designing it, nor are we specifically asking for this solution. We would generally like the lighting to be controlled.
4. It seems to be within 100 ft. of the shoreline, meaning BCDC may have jurisdiction.

JB:

1. The rendered image is a great representation of her concern. There are few places around here where we get uninterrupted views of the bay, and this is one of them. When you drive in, the bay, the City, the ridgelines are all laid out. She questions the scale, could it be lower in the landscape? 4'-6" seems to block out the bay. We walk this area, so we are concerned.
2. JB discussed will Greenwood Cove Condominiums be coming to us for a sign? Discussion ensued as to who owns the property. Greenwood Bay Condominiums spans both sides of the sign, but the actual land they will place the sign is owned by Strawberry Recreation District, who has approved this (Applicant is actually the District – not the Greenwood Bay Condo Assoc.).
3. JS pointed out that allowable signage is 6 square feet for multi-unit residential, 24 SF for commercial. In the 1 Belvedere Place submittal, they are zoned multi-unit residential, so they were using that allowable size. However, since the use is commercial, the limit is

actually 24 SF. The use dictates, not the zoning. MW commented that the applicant cited the 6 SF on their drawings, which made our comments more direct. MW thinks Planning should note the applicable codes for review instead of just shuffling it to us for review.

4. Back to this sign, JB states this is the gateway to the Bay, so she wonders if it is too tall. JB likes the materials, the graphics, aesthetically the scale is wrong for that spot. 13 feet wide seems a bit aggressive, but may be appropriate for what they are trying to do.

JS:

1. JS agrees with scale concern and wonders if it could be more see-through at the 13 foot length. He also thinks BCDC will have an issue with it blocking the view to the bay.

MW:

1. MW is troubled by the size and the opacity of it, agreeing with JS and JB.
2. MW gets the applicant's "idea" of scale because of vehicular traffic, but wonders if it could be more in profile or individual letters to allow the viewer to see through it to the bay beyond.
3. MW asked why Strawberry Rec isn't here? The applicant and JS said they approved and wrote a letter after their hearing two months ago. MW noted that the online materials that the public (and MW) had access to do not have that letter. JS asked again at the County to make sure they upload all applicant materials to the County website.
 - a) MW subsequently checked, and the letter was NOT included, and that seems to be a problem.
4. MW noted that if we ask that it be more transparent, that JS's downlights may be more of an issue. JB/MW both don't want to design this, but a more indirect light source is appropriate.
5. Michael proposed profiling the graphic as the top of the sign. MW noted for reference the 3x8 tables on their side – what is proposed is bigger than two of those side by side. 4'-6" just seems too tall.
6. JB: The photomontage is a perfect example of how tall it is. The horizon should be the shoreline, not the sign.
7. JB: When you come to this area, if you are looking for the sign, it is there. But if you just want to look at the Bay, you don't have to look at your sign.
8. MW: We want to make this more supportable, so you should be closer to the 6 SF, not at 9 times that at 52 SF. We can possibly support a sign larger than the required.
9. JB: We need to make this more appropriate for this location.
10. JS: Let's make this more sympathetic to the pedestrians as well.

There was a MOTION TO CONTINUE the Strawberry Recreation District - Proposed Greenwood Bay Condominium Sign with the following conditions and recommendations to be resubmitted for another review before the SDRB:

-Reduce the height and scale with the understanding to maximize and preserve the view to the Bay from the street.

-We support the color scheme, but we ask that they re-evaluate the lighting and the design.

-The lighting should be more indirect and shielded; downlighting is preferred over up-lighting.

-The CRI and color temperature of proposed LED lighting be considered and specified. We recommend a CRI of at least 90 and a color approximating 3000 degrees K.

-The lighting controls should be specified. Photocell switching is recommended.

- BCDC regulations should be consulted and verified before resubmittal.

The Motion to Continue was approved unanimously. M/S: JB/MW Vote: JB: yes, MW: yes, JS: yes

MINUTES

The minutes from the previous Dec. 17, 2018 meeting were approved with the change that they were written by JB (not PO).

M/S: MW/JS Vote: JB: yes, MW: yes, JS: yes

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25.

Notes prepared by Matt Williams