

Tamalpais Design Review Board Meeting Minutes
Regular Meeting: June 19th, 2019, 7:00 PM
Meeting Location: TCSD Cabin - 60 Tennessee Valley Road, Mill Valley

I) Call to Order: 7pm - Andrea Montalbano (Chair)

Board Members Present: Andrea Montalbano (AM), Logan Link (LL), Alan Jones (AJ), Erin Alley (EA), Doron Dreksler (DD)

II) Approval of minutes: June 5th, 2019

Motion to approve: AJ; Second: DD; unanimous approval

III) Correspondence: DD shares that he received a call from Steven Gertz. Gertz is the owner of 907 Centro, Mill Valley and came before our board in 2018. Board had approved of project / request for variance. The County has since denied the variance. DD directed Gertz to a contact who deals with variances.

IV) Public Comments / Items not on the Agenda:

Tam Valley resident Lee Budish announces the formation of the Tam Valley Public Safety Task Force.

- Held first meeting on 6.17.19
- DD asks for more information.
- Budish summarizes that the goal of the group, which is just beginning to form, is to encourage preparation for and prevention of wildfires and other safety issues in Tam Valley.
- LL attended 6.17.19 meeting and feels the group will be helpful for the neighborhood.

V) Agenda Items:

1. Review of letter to County officials calling for design review of Alta Way Extension, as required by Development Code:

Summary:

Board reviews a draft letter to be sent to the planning department. Letter points out that, per the Development Code, Design Review is required for the development of paper streets. Many neighbors and one developer from the project, Mitch Brown, are present and discussion ensues. Neighbors express a desire for more transparency / complete information from developers. Board and neighbors urge Brown and team to create a master plan of the project and host a community meeting to gather comments, prior to coming before Design Review.

Complete notes:

- Approximately 20 members of the public present for Alta Way discussion.

- AJ has prepared draft of letter from TDRB to County. The focus of the letter is that, per the County Development Code, design review is clearly required for the development of paper streets.
- AM further explains to public the intent of our letter and the role of Design Review.

Public Comments / Open Conversation:

- neighbor: Tam Plan is very clear about subdivisions, yet neighbors have never received a formal reply from the County about why this project is not being treated as such.
- Mitch Brown, one of the investors in the project and a resident of Woodside Avenue, introduces himself to the Board and public.
 - became involved in project five years ago
 - in attendance to put a “face” to the developers.
 - addresses neighborhood concern that current proposal is a “Trojan horse” for more to come; says he has never thought of it this way.
 - notes that motivation for creating larger lots is to allow for more open space and better vehicular access and water pressure for fire safety. Also notes creation of an HOA.
 - MB has no objection to undergoing Design Review.
- AM asks MB why he/developers have not met with neighbors.
- MB knows this should be done but developers have not yet felt they have a feasible/complete enough project to present.
- AJ asks MB if he understands why there is so much community concern; also notes that community would like to see a comprehensive plan with inclusion of the limits of development.
- MB explains that they do not have deep pockets, which in itself brings limits. They would like to create a buildable project by they, themselves, may not be the ones to build it.
- Neighbor: there is a set of rules for development and building that cannot be circumvented. Residents working on their own homes must follow the rules and developers must do the same
- all of the boxes need to be checked for community to be satisfied.
- AM notes that there is a pattern of inexperienced developers failing to handle things gracefully; animosity is created if people do not feel listened to. For success, a developer must meet with neighbors before filing an application.
- Neighbor: board said exactly this in 2014. Developers did not coordinate neighborhood meeting or show up to present the project to the Tam Design Review Board.
 - MB acknowledges that he is inexperienced; business partner, Daniel, is more experienced.
- Neighbor asks MB if the intention is to build the road and sell the project; MB replies that this may be a possibility.
- AJ brings up concern that the creation of this road will open the doors for development further up the hillside; MB replies that developing Fairview and further would cost millions of dollars.
- Neighbor: there are many people with experience who could be hired to help create and communicate a plan.
- Neighbor: neighbors want to see a master plan.
- AM references the Weissman project on Panoramic as a situation that was handled in a way that worked out well. Explained that the neighbors organized themselves and put together a list

of concerns, which they then gave to the developer (Weissman). Weissman then revised his design.

- DD tells MB that Scott at IPA, who has worked as a consultant for the Alta Way project, should be able to help with this master plan / creation of a comprehensive proposal.
- Neighbor shares story a resident of Alta Way who hosted a gathering/discussion before going ahead with a garage proposal; cites this as an example of being “neighborly.”
- LL clarifies that board is recommending that developers meet with neighbors prior to, and in addition to, coming before the Design Review Board.
- AJ further counsels that developers use what they already have as a starting point for discussion.
- MB acknowledges the validity of this idea. For transparency, MB discloses that he and his family are moving out of state soon. There are three investors in the project, all Marin County residents.
- Environmental Impact Report is mentioned; neighbors note this was never completed.
- LL asks MB if developers have a goal in mind for how they would ideally like the project to end up; i.e. a five-year plan; MB does not.
- DD reiterates the importance of creating a plan, addressing the details of neighborhood concerns, and defining the built environment.

Motion: AJ makes a motion to approve the letter with the addition of comments outlined in discussion. EA seconds; unanimous approval.

2. Review of letter to County officials addressing nuisance lighting issue at Muir Woods Lodge (155 Shoreline Highway):

- DD has prepared a draft letter from the TDRB to the County addressing board concerns.
- DD plans to revise the letter to clarify that that current lighting does not comply with the Tam Plan and needs to be adjusted. Will include a photo and reference the Tam Plan, along with complaints from drivers / the public.

3. Review of the TDRB Design Review Handout (process and required items):

- AM presents most recent draft of TDRB list of required items for applicants.
- AM also notes that she shared the Tiburon Design Review flow chart with Jeremy Tejirian at the County as an example of an additional item that would be helpful if created.
- Board replies well to current version of the list of requirements.
- AJ & LL recommend improved clarity about the difference between informal and formal review.
- AM will work on revisions.

4. Review of Tamalpais Junction’s numerous commercial signs not meeting Community Plan standards:

- As decided at the 6.5.19 meeting, AM has photographed numerous sign violations throughout Tam Junction.
- LL notes that issue seems to be getting worse; board agrees.
- LL recommends the addition of an image of the new sign posted on the Martin Brother's lot; AM agrees.
- Board reviews photos. Each board member takes a portion of the images and commits to finding passages in the Tam Plan that outline the specific violation occurring in each assigned photo.

VI) Public in attendance:

Tony Keegan (Alta Way/Fairway); Heidi and Hugh Engelbrechten (Alta Way); Susan Montrose (Browning St); Laura Figueirinhas (Browning Ct); Lee Budish (Browning Ct); Jim Budish (Browning Ct); Andrew Bornaud (Browning Ct); Mitch Brown (Woodside Ave); Cathy Edgett (Shasta Way); Steve Edgett (Shasta Way); Liz Allen (Fairview Ave); Ruthanne Ranz Appell (Northern Ave); Rena Chase (Browning Ct); Stephen Laputka (Denise Ct); Ashley Laputka (Denise Ct); Vickie Ine (Chamberlain Ct); Terry Scussel (Brookline Way); Michael Ina (Chamberlain Ct); JoAnne Smith (Browning St)

VII) Meeting adjourned: 8:35pm