

Tamalpais Design Review Board Meeting Minutes  
Regular Meeting: June 5th, 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), Doron Dreksler (DD), Logan Link (LL), Alan Jones (AJ)

**II) Approval of minutes: May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019**

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

**III) Correspondence:** AM: Board member Erin Alley is not able to attend this meeting or the next.

**IV) Items not on the agenda:**

AJ brings up the Alta Way project.

The Alta Way project is a source of ongoing conversation in the community.

Understanding/speculation is that the applicant is currently aiming to combine several smaller lots to create ten larger lots. Applicant is also in the process of getting approval to build a road.

- AJ shares that the application to build a road is being treated in planning like a public works project, causing many neighbors to feel that they do not have an opportunity to have their thoughts heard.
- AJ also notes that County planner Jeremy Tejirian has said that an approval of the road does not also provide approval for the mergers.
- AM brings up that lots should be established before a road is constructed; board agrees. AM believes, and will confirm, that the development code outlines that any development of paper streets comes before the design review board.
- DD adds that over seven lots is a subdivision and should be treated as such; board agrees.

**V) Agenda Items:**

*1. Informal/courtesy review of a potential multi-family project at 225 Tennessee Valley Road, Mill Valley.*

Presentation by Bryan Murdock (BM), owner of Murdock Architecture Inc. and architect for property owner Per Bessing:

- Thus far, BM has only been through a consult with the County.
- Curious to hear the board's thoughts about setbacks and FAR.
- Property zoning is RMP-30
- Property was approved for 10 units, attached/stacked, with 17 parking spaces, in 1983; current owner is not trying to pursue this plan.

- The property currently consists of a dilapidated main home and newer second unit, both cottage style.
- BM has prepared two possibilities for the owner, both consisting of freestanding cottages in a traditional style. Both plans keep existing newer structure and remove the older structure.

#### Option A:

- 6 cottages (including existing cottage). All include two bedrooms and internal garages. Approx. 1,300sqft + garage (approx. 230sqft)
- At consult, County planning responded positively open space between units (no attached walls) and would like to see a landscaping plan.
- County also said that the only official setback requirements are those outlined by fire (3ft) and building. Will mainly be discretionary / they will look to design review for opinion.
- Will require an encroachment permit for planting along the road.
- In this plan, FAR is approx. 52% and lot coverage is 38%.

#### Option B:

- 5 cottages (including existing cottage), all with two bedrooms and internal garages. Approx. 1,300sqft + garage (approx. 230sqft)
- Approx. 40% FAR and 31% lot coverage.

#### Other items of note:

- existing subterranean drainage begins at back of lot and runs underground to street.
- a new pump station was installed in the somewhat recent past.
- fire department says okay, although they would want to see a new fire hydrant.
- average slope is 12%
- lot is 14,631sqft.

#### Questions from Board/discussion with Murdock:

- board feels positively about freestanding cottage style and notes that this project helps address the need for housing.
- would be helpful to have more clarity about what was approved in the 1980s and if this holds up as part of a master plan.
- making exceptions to Tam Plan setbacks and FAR is not regular practice for board.
- AM notes that, in the Tam Plan, FAR guidelines for multi family are the same as single family (30%).
- DD looks for ways to add more outdoor space; board agrees this is important.
- AM says board would be concerned about setbacks and need for open space.
- DD raises concern about pedestrians coming and going from property on busy Tennessee Valley Road.

- LL proposes reducing the size of each cottage to lower the FAR to 30%, also allowing for traditional 6ft setbacks and increased outdoor space.
- LL adds that 925sft is not an unreasonable size for a cottage.
- BM most likely will not submit anything formally until at least October and will explore ways to create 6ft setbacks and reduce FAR.

*2. Nomination and vote on Logan Link as 2019 board secretary.*

AJ nominated; DD seconds; unanimous approval.

*3. Board discussion and action on design review list of requirements.*

- board reviews draft of list.
- AM notes that she intends to add that applicant should bring letters from neighbors.
- AJ feels that landscaping and drainage should be separate items on list.
- LL agrees re landscaping and drainage; also presents for inclusion a summary of the goals of the TDRB board, a link to Tam Plan and native plant list, a summary of how our meetings are formatted, and an outline of what applicants should do to prepare for the meeting (reading Tam Plan, meeting with neighbors, etc).
- DD notes that Tiburon has a great flow chart showing the steps in the design review process.
- AM suggests that we also clarify that the “recommendations” for specific neighborhoods included in the Tam Plan are treated by the board as guidelines to be followed.
- AM will revise draft list based upon suggestions discussed.

*4. Board discussion and action on temporary signage at Tam Junction.*

- AM’s understanding is that all signage must be high quality and permanent in nature.
- AJ suggests that board writes a letter to code enforcement to address violations in Tam Junction area.
- LL adds that letter should include photos and excerpt of signage guidelines in the Tam Plan.
- AM notes that, aside from temporary signage, there is a neon sign in the Junction currently which goes against guidelines.
- DD has also noted an outdoor lighting violation.
- Decision: AM will photograph signs; DD will photograph lighting; board will compile and submit a letter.
- LL reads message from resident asking for advice about how to go about installing a Fire Safe sign in Tam Valley. Board discusses.
- LL will send resident signage guidelines from the Tam Plan and suggest that he reach out to public works and/or Caltrans to inquire about placement on their land.

**VI) Public in attendance:** Bryan Murdock (BM)

**VII) Meeting adjourned:** 8:45pm