

**TAMLAPAIS DESIGN REVIEW BOARD (TDRB)**

**FINAL Notes**

**Public Meeting – Wednesday April 20, 2022**

**Meeting location:** Via Zoom.

**Call to order:** 7:00 p.m. by Douglas Wallace, Chair.

**Board members present:** Doug Wallace, Andrea Montalbano, Logan Link

**Board members absent:** Michael Wara

**Other attendees:** Nick Bucklin, Sebastian Goodwin, Fran Halperin, Amy Kalish, Jack Krystal, Peter Moeck, Jo Omi, Lisa Wojcik, and Katherine Lehmann, note-taker. Plus: Elena, Gudrun, Jan, Joey, Sean and MacBook Pro 17.

**Approval of the minutes from:**

- **February 2, 2022** were approved unanimously.
- Correction to February 16th minutes: Agenda Item 4: "Somebody who is engaged is more important than one from over the ridge," to be replaced with "An engaged candidate is top priority." With this revision, the minutes from the **February 16, 2022**, were also approved unanimously.

**Correspondence:**

- With regard to the Housing Element, Doug reported that Supervisor Stephanie Moulton-Peters has written to the County with a number of suggestions for studies, such as safe evacuation routes, transportation, putting a tax on vacant homes, etc. Our suggestions were taken seriously by the Supervisors and the County, and thanks to the Board members for pulling together that comment letter.

**Public Comments about any items *not* on tonight's agenda:**

- None.

**AGENDA ITEM #1:**

**Applicant:** Peter Moeck

**Address:** A Vacant Lot on Spring Drive, Mill Valley, CA

**Assessor's Parcel:** 049-182-03

**Project ID:** (3523)

**Planner:** Erin Yattaw

**1. Moeck Design Review (P3523)**

The applicant requests Design Review approval to construct a new 2,674 square foot single-family dwelling and a 513 square-foot attached garage on a vacant lot in Mill Valley. The 3,187

square feet of proposed development would result in a floor area ratio of 28 percent on the 9,647 square foot lot. It appears the proposed building would reach a maximum height of 29 feet, 6 inches above surrounding grade and the exterior walls would have the following setbacks: 8 feet, 6 inches from the southern front property line; 5 feet, 1 inch from the western side property line; 5 feet, 1 inch from the eastern side property line; over 90 feet from the northern rear property line. Various site improvements would also be entailed in the proposed development, including a new driveway, new retaining walls, and new fencing.

Design Review approval is required pursuant to Marin County Code Section 22.42.020.D because the project entails constructing a single-family dwelling on a vacant lot that is at least 50 percent smaller in total area than required for new lots under the slope regulations in compliance with Section 22.82.050.

**PRESENTATION:**

- **Peter Moeck:** Owner and engineer for the project.
- The Geotechnical report showed that the site is suitable for proposed development. There is a private road Spring Drive and residents are responsible for the upkeep. Trees are to be cut down, to keep the area fire safe.
- His design meets all FAR requirements, meets all the city and county codes and regulations, including the Tam Plan. He is not asking for any variances.
- He had drawings made for the sight lines and views that might be obstructed from the neighbors' viewpoint. His design allows for the maximum amount of views for the neighbors.
- He also presented letters of support from neighbors.
- Story Poles will be put up to show exactly how the house will lay on the hillside.
- Peter noted that the square footage numbers are slightly different than mentioned in the description above. Here are the new calculations he is submitting for this project:

If approved, the future address of this vacant lot will be:  
812 Spring Drive, APN 049-182-03

Lot Size:	9,647 sq.ft.
Garage:	513 sq.ft.
Allowed Per Tam Plan:	480 sq.ft.
Garage Square Footage above 480 sq.ft.:	33 sq.ft.
Lower Floor:	1,327 sq.ft.
Upper Floor:	<u>1,314 sq.ft.</u>

**TOTAL: 2,674 sq.ft.**

**Allowable, per the Tam Valley Plan: 2,850 sq.ft.**

**BOARD COMMENTS:**

- Fence and the Retaining Wall: In parallel to the retaining wall, the fence along the road should be made of natural materials, such as Redwood, but perhaps not completely solid.
- Artificial turf. It does not recycle and natural, indigenous plants are preferred.
- The floor area ratio is acceptable.

- The board was unaware of any project for the residence located at 808 Spring Drive. (It is owned by the applicant, has been demolished and will be rebuilt. It will eventually be sold to pay for the construction on this new lot.)
- Confirmed that the FAR is in line with the Tam Plan.
- The TDRB board was so appreciative to have an applicant who had done their homework, and actually read the Tam Plan, etc. before coming before the board.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

- **Jo Omi:** Was happy to write a letter of support for this project.
- **Bruce Forester:** Lives at 809 Spring Drive: Said that this house is bigger than the others on Spring Drive. Primary access is facing the street, which makes the house appear even larger. The fence along the front of the house cuts it off from the rest of the street. Most of their neighbors do not have a fence, which creates more of an open feeling along the road.
- **Jan Rapport:** The way he is building this house is perfect. It hardly affects my house at all. A change in the look is a good thing.
- **Jo Omi:** We have a fence. The road is not safe. There are cars that go too fast.

#### **BOARD DISCUSSION:**

- **Andrea:** Recommended pulling in the retaining wall from the front, and also from the side, which is currently on the property line. This change will also help with County requirements and future Fire Truck access). Also, a lower fence height would be better. Certainly under 6' feet, and closer to 4' feet would be ideal.
- **Peter Moeck:** There is enough space for future expansion of the road to allow fire truck access. Moving in the front retaining wall a few feet would be advantageous for all of us.
- **Logan:** Is there landscaping between the fencing and the street? Can you push back the fence to allow for more landscaping along the road?
- **Andrea:** Artificial Turf: It is better if the edges are softened with some plants and shrubs. The house is part of the natural landscape and should all blend in together. There are some artificial turfs that look more natural than others. Choose it carefully if you must use artificial turf at all.
- **Building:** White paint is not recommended. The Tam Plan recommends buildings to blend in to the natural landscape. Earth tones are preferred for blending in with the existing neighborhood and the environment.
- Windows are vinyl and are not recommended. Fiberglass is better, more stable, looks more like wood.
- Window trims should match the color of the windows, rather than the body color of the building.
- Planner to check that cross faces are counted when they are bigger than a certain size.
- Cupola over the building, 4 ft above. Does it obstruct views? **Fran:** It's just a small blip on the horizon and creates interest in the skyline. Removing it would make for a much more mundane building.

**Motion:** To approve the project under the following conditions:

- That the FAR is reviewed according to the Tam Plan.
- The retaining wall locations in the front and the side are brought in by two feet.
- For the fence to have some see-through visibility, with a bit of a view through materials and less than 4 feet above grade.

- The body color of the house to be changed from white to an earth tone or another color that blends in with the neighborhood and the natural environment.
- Artificial turf is either ideally changed to natural plantings, or the edges are softened and rounded.
- Vinyl windows are changed to fiberglass to match the character of the neighborhood.

**Merit Comments: (Recommendations only)**

- Paint the trim around the windows to match the windowpane trim.
- Reconsider the artificial turf and go with native plants.
- Incorporate as much indigenous fire-safe landscaping as possible.

**AGENDA ITEM #2:**

- "Criteria for fire-safe landscaping," to be discussed by Michael Wara at the next TDRB meeting.

**AGENDA ITEM #3: Vacancy on the Board:**

- **Douglas:** Invited Lisa Wojcik and Amy Kalish to make any remarks or ask any questions of the board.
- **Lisa:** Said it is interesting to see how the TDRB works, and thanks for inviting her to attend the meeting. She has been familiarizing herself with the Tam Plan. Lisa joined the Housing Element presentation. Her background is as a teacher of science and the environment.
- **Amy:** Said she is interested in design review and local control and is actively involved in the Housing Element exercise. As a painter, she said that the proposed artificial lawn was disturbing to her, and the proposed white body color of the house was offensive. However, she found the discussion to be a respectful one.
- **Doug:** Please join us again at our next meeting on May 18.
- **Logan:** Application form to be filled out; to be sent to anyone wanting to join.

**Next Meeting: Wednesday, May 18, 2022.**

**The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:30 p.m.**