

Tamalpais Design Review Board Meeting Minutes
Regular Meeting: November 16th, 2022, 7:00 PM
Meeting Location: Zoom

I) Call to Order: 7:00pm - Doug Wallace (Chair)

Board Members Present: Doug Wallace (DW), Amy Kalish (AK), Logan Link (LL)

II) Approval of minutes: November 2nd, 2022

Approval of minutes deferred to a future meeting, as DW was not in attendance on 11.2.22 and LL and AK do not make a quorum.

III) Correspondence:

- LL introduces Tom Lamar, a potential candidate for the vacant TDRB position. Tom is a resident of District 4 in the Tam Area. Tom briefly discussed his design-based background and interest in serving. Board expresses a positive response. Tom has submitted an application to the County.

- LL and AK met to discuss the Form Based Code, Housing Element, and Safety Element and, as discussed at a previous TDRB meeting, considered drafting a letter from the board related to these topics. LL and AK determined that it would be logical to wait until after the Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission joint session to draft a letter, as this session was moved up to November 16th from its previously planned December date. DW responded that it would be possible for the TDRB to host a December 7th meeting to review this letter.

- DW shared that the County is making progress in hiring a new team member to fill a currently vacant position that includes the responsibility of acting as TDRB secretary.

IV) Items not on the agenda: no non-agenda items.

V) Agenda Items:

1. Aston Design Review and ADU Permit

325 Melrose, Mill Valley
APN 048-031-03
Applicant: Julie Johnson
Project Planner: Joshua Bertain

Project Description: the applicant requests Design Review approval to construct - (a) a new 433 square foot detached Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) in the rear yard, and (B) a new deck that would be located above a proposed carport (not subject to Design Review) proposed in the front yard of a property developed with an existing residence in an unincorporated area of Mill Valley.

The 433 square foot ADU would result in a floor area ratio of 35 percent on the 8,002 square foot lot. The height and setbacks of the proposed structures are provided below.

(a) The proposed ADU would reach a maximum height of 21 feet, 7 inches above the surrounding grade and the exterior walls would have the following setbacks: more than 100 feet from the western front property line; 6 feet, 9 inches from the northern side property line; 1 foot, 8 inches from the southern side property line; and 7 feet from the eastern rear property line.

(b) The proposed deck would be located directly above the proposed carport. The surface level of the deck would reach a maximum height of 10 feet, 6 inches above the surrounding grade and the exterior walls would have the following setbacks: 3 feet, 5 inches from the western front property line; 8 feet, 8 inches from the northern side property line; 17 feet, 1 inch from the southern side property line; and more than 100 feet from the eastern rear property line.

Design Review approval is required pursuant to Section 22.54.045 and 22.42.020.B of the Marin County Development Code because the project entails constructing a detached ADU that would not conform to the setbacks or height limit established by the governing R1 zoning district. Additionally, the proposed deck is subject to obtaining Design Review approval because the deck projects into the required front yard setback established by the governing zoning district.

Presentation by David Marlatt, Architect

- Applicants would like to create a more livable home with safer access
- Current driveway is in poor condition. Home sits on a rural Mill Valley road.
- Many carports and garages in the immediate neighborhood sit close to the road.
- Applicant proposes a two car carport, set back 3ft from the road and with a roof deck
- An existing structure in the backyard is proposed to become an accessory dwelling unit (ADU). This existing building has plumbing and electrical currently.
- DM is unsure of when the existing backyard structure was built.
- Existing home has a 29.4% floor area ratio (FAR)
- An ADU can go above the FAR per regulations
- Renovation of main home includes less than 10 sqft of additional living space
- The main home has been added onto in the past. The main adjustment proposed involves moving forward the staircase and the front door. An enclosed porch will be removed to assure FAR compliance is maintained.
- Siding will be a deep, warm grey. Some windows would be removed; the rest replaced. New windows will be aluminum clad, wooden windows.
- A vegetation management plan will be created. The renovation will trigger the addition of fire sprinklers.

Questions from the board:

- LL asks if any of the windows in the ADU face neighbors. DM replies that vegetation screens the view of neighboring structures. LL points out that privacy vegetation may be required to be removed for fire safety.
- On the topic of fire, DM notes that fire safe siding can be used
- DW asks for additional details about the front yard setback for the roof deck. DM, replies that the existing house is within the front yard setback. A six foot porch would be allowed without a variance, but a variance is required for the deck to extend to the front edge of the carport.
- AK asks if neighbors can be seen from front deck. DM replies replies that they cannot, they are located down a long driveway.
- Board asks if applicants have spoken to neighbors. They have not.

Comments from neighbors:

- TL points out that landscaping the front edge of the carport deck would soften the look and bring back the feeling of nature that is prevalent in the neighborhood

Board discussion:

- LL suggests that the railing of the carport roof deck be moved back several feet. This will keep the carport from overwhelming the street with excessive vertical height caused by the railings, while still allowing for a spacious and usable deck area. LL suggests that the front yard fence be moved back a foot also, allowing space for landscaping in front.
- LL feels a landscaping plan is crucial for the ADU, front yard, and carport deck area.
- Board would like to see letters from neighbors
- AK expresses concern about the use of bright yellow in the entry area, as this does not conform with Tam Plan guidance for the use of earth tones.
- DW notes that the floor area ratio is reasonable

Motion:

LL makes a motion to rule the project incomplete; AK seconds; unanimous approval
Merit comments as follows:

Board recommends that the carport deck step back from the edge/street; that a landscaping plan be provided; and that letters from neighbors be submitted to the board and County.

VI) Public in attendance: Tom Lamar

VII) Meeting adjourned: 8:10pm