

**Tam Design Review Board Meeting Minutes**  
**Public Hearing - September 2, 2015**  
**Secretary: John McCormick**

**Call to order:** 7PM Alan Jones, Chair

**Board Members Present:** Alan Jones, April Post, John McCormick, Patrick LePelch, Loren Mollner

**Approval of minutes of August 5, 2015:** Post / McCormick 2<sup>nd</sup> 3 ayes

**Public comment on items not on the agenda:** None

**Communications & Correspondence:** TDRB received notification of working this Saturday ( 9/5 ) at the Good Earth building site & letter from Water Alliance raising new concerns about 346 Laverne Ave, TDRB informed all public present – any concerns regarding a project should be sent in writing to the County Planner handling the project

**Public Present:** Mardi Horowitz, Renee Binder, Ron De Stefano, Marcie Wright, Annie Blackburn, Russell Blackburn, JP Muller, Vera Gates, Mike Courtney, Michael Rex, Susan Denny, Kevin Denny

**1. Design Review:** 346 Laverne Ave, Mill Valley 14-97, Project ID 2014-0234 AP #047-181-15  
Applicant: McMahan Architects Planner: Heidi Scoble

**Project Summary:** In response to the March 4, 2015 Tamalpais Design Review Board meeting the applicant has revised the project as follows: 1. Demolition of the existing residence, 2. 5,137 square feet of building area (includes covered terrace), 3. 4,600 square feet of floor area (includes covered terrace) 4. 24.2% FAR, 5. 26 ft height, 6. Setbacks: 25 foot south front setback, 6 foot east side yard setback, 10 foot west side yard setback, greater than 100 feet north rear yard setback.

The project has been redesigned to address the Tamalpais Design Review comments. The applicant has provided a narrative to describe the project modifications.

**Design Review is required:** Because the total building area is greater than 4000 square feet, approval of the project will be based of the following findings - Marin County Code Section 22.42.060 (Design Review).

**Project discussion by Owners Attorney & Architect:** Provided the following information: A. Project size reduced by 500 sq', B. Letters of support from neighbors – no letters proved to TDRB, C. A Shadow study was provided which purported to show minimal impacts on neighboring property, TDRB could not confirm the study. Neighbors pointed out the in this valley the direct shadow of the house is not the predominant influence. D. Primary design goal – project to be viewed as single story structure from Laverne Ave., E. Creek restricted building location, must be 25' from creek, F. No comment regarding Audubon Letter, J. The access to the site is very limited; the Redwood tree at Laverne Ave will need to be removed to install new driveway access. A number of options were review with Civil Engineer. One option was to purchase a sliver of land from 342 Laverne to provide an access to the property. Since this could not be worked out, the only workable option is to remove the tree, K. Radius around Redwood tree on East side increased, reviewed with arborist. L. Western property line shadow study on June 21 for 350 Laverne – major impact from 6:00am to 7:00am. M. Size of home is not largest in area – chart provided alleges the proposed development was not largest of the neighboring properties, TDRB could not confirm the provided chart. N. 500 sq' size decrease discussed by Arch; set back on West side change; second story pushed back; trees on West side to be kept; house pulled to the front of property to provide more open space for neighbors on the East and West side. Response – slope is minimal at that location.

**TDRB discussion:** TDRB questioned working with neighbors. *Response* – have met with them a number of times and have tried to address the concerns. West side neighbor would like side yard setback to be 25'; to

move home that much would be a major impact to design and size. TDRB questioned site drainage. *Response* – drainage plan per civil engineer. All site and roof drainage flows to pipe located on East side of home, which runs along property line and terminates in a water distribution system. TDRB recommends moving distribution system away from East property line towards center of site.

TDRB questioned vegetation management plan, and the use of native plants – *Response* - Landscape Architect – tree protection is noted on the plan, and is in keeping with county standards and requirements. LA’s review of planting noted on plan – TDRB recommends more native plants at back of property, TDRB will forward a list of meadow plants. TDRB questioned fire protection requirements and how much will the Redwood trees have to be limbed. *Response* – Arborist reviewed and is satisfied with the original 6’ set back for Redwood trees

**Public Comments:** Neighbors on both sides of the project felt the size of house is not in keeping with the quality and character of Laverne and will impact the look of the neighborhood. Removal of the large Redwood tree on Laverne would have a major impact to the neighborhood.

**TDRB Comments:** Applicant responded to past TDRB review comments: the building has been pulled forward as the site allowed; moving any further the building would have a large visual impact on the community; a small house would be a better fit for the site.

**Completeness:** Post / Jones 2<sup>nd</sup>: 5 ayes

**Approval:** McCormick / April 2<sup>nd</sup>: 4 ayes - 1 ney

**2. Yasuda Variance approval:** 120 Laverne Ave, Mill Valley, AP #048-061-49 Project ID: 2015-0261  
Applicant: Lindsay Peterson, Richardson Architects Planner: Jocelyn Drake

**Project Summary:** Variance approval for relief from the northern and southern side yard setbacks in order to allow for the construction of two single-story additions on an existing residence located on a substandard lot; relief from the maximum permitted 30% floor area ratio to accommodate construction of the additions. The northernmost addition would be 225 square feet; southernmost addition would be 84 square feet, resulting in 2,536 square feet of building area and 2,250 square feet of floor area for a floor area ratio of 37.5%. The height will not to be altered via construction of the additions, at approximately 28 feet 6 inches from grade. The proposed additions would result in the following setbacks from the exterior walls: more than 100 feet from the western front property line; 12 feet 4 inches from the eastern rear property line; 1 foot 6 inches from the northern side property line, and 2 feet 6 inches from the southern rear (sic) property line. The materials proposed to be utilized in construction of the additions will match the existing residence.

**Variance approval required:** Because the proposed project entails construction within the required side yard setbacks and the proposed floor area exceeds the maximum allowed 30% FAR.

**Project discussion by architect:** Present entrance to home is thru the kitchen: new entrance addition added to North side. Addition on South side is a kitchen remodel to provide a larger space. Owner has discussed the addition with a few of the neighbors, has received a letter from the neighbor on Laverne across from the project: the neighbor is happy with the design. The variance is requested because of the shape of the lot: - extremely narrow, with a very small building area.

**TDRB discussion:** The lot is impacted, by Reed St & Laverne Ave right of ways, this leaves a very narrow lot and limited building area. The additions will have no visual impacts to the neighbors.

**Completeness:** Jones / Le Plech 2<sup>nd</sup>: 5 ayes

**Variance Approval:** Mollner / Le Plech 2<sup>nd</sup> :5 ayes Reason for approval – the lot is very narrow & substandard, the house size is restricted by a very small building footprint. New building replaces exterior deck.

**Merits:** County to review FAR % with regard to the structure that looks like it was once a garage.

**3. Denny Design Review:** 402 Median Way, Mill Valley AP #050-052-67 Project ID# 2015-0228  
Applicant: Michael Rex Architects Planner: Tammy Taylor

**Project Summary:** Construct 407 square feet of additions to an existing 4,080 square foot house; existing 592 square foot garage on the property, equals total building area of 5,079 square feet. The existing floor area ratio on the 49,005 square foot lot is 8.55%.;the floor area ratio will be 9.4%.; Maximum height of 28 feet above surrounding grade. Setbacks from the exterior walls: 124 feet from the west front property line, 116 feet from the south side property line, 80 feet from the north side property line, and 112 feet from the east rear property line.

**Design Review is Required:** Per Development Code, the project is in a planned zoning district, and total building area exceeds 10% of the median building area of homes in the surrounding, per section 22.42.005 of the Development Code. Zoning: RMP-0.5 Countywide Plan Designation: PR Planned Residential

**Project Discussion by Architect:** Existing roof structure is in need repair – roof is sagging. Replacing roofing with class A comp shingles, the exterior wood shingles are to be replaced with stucco. All existing windows & doors to be replaced with new energy efficient ones. The addition is on the East side and not visible by the surrounding neighbors. The additions will correct a poor kitchen / dining room flow.

**TDRB discussion:** TDRB questioned deck, and the use of native plants. *Response* – decking material is waterproof material, and they will review the need for planting under deck.

**Completeness:** McCormick / Post 2<sup>nd</sup> : 5 ayes

**Approval:** McCormick / Post 2<sup>nd</sup> : 5 ayes

**Merits:** TDRB recommends using native plants in any new planting. Although the house is large the lot is of ample size to accommodate the proposed addition with out adverse impact on the neighborhood.

**4. McDonald Design Review:** 271 Loring Ave, Mill Valley, AP #050-032-44  
Project ID# 2015-0269 Applicant: Brooks McDonald Planner: Jocelyn Drake

**Project Summary:** Retroactive Design Review approval to allow 3 new retaining walls, recently constructed in the front yard of the property, to remain. Per the Design Review of October of 2014, the retaining walls were constructed in conjunction with a new single-family residence. In accordance with the October 2014 Approval, the walls were constructed with the materials approved for construction and in their location; however the height of the walls is taller than what was previously approved. The retaining wall delineating the parking spaces in the front yard was approved at a maximum height of 9 feet, 2 inches. The newly constructed wall is a maximum height of 9 feet, 5 inches and is greater in height overall. The retaining wall located on the rear portion of the garage and trash storage area was approved at a maximum height of 9 feet, 1 inch and the newly constructed wall is a maximum height of 14 feet, 6 inches.

**Design Review Required:** Per Marin County Code Section 22.20.050.A.1, Design Review the retaining walls exceed 6 feet in height. Zoning: R1-B1 (Single-family Residential District, 6,000 square-foot minimum lot size) Countywide Plan Designation: SF6 (Low Density Residential, 4-7 units per acre) Community Plan: Tamalpais Community Plan

**Architect / Owner discussion:** During construction it was found that the retaining walls as designed, would force water into the house, the retaining walls were re-designed to eliminate the water issue, the large 14' – 6" at back of house is mostly hidden from view from the street, and will be mostly covered by stair and planting. Vine type planting is planned for the large retaining wall.

**TDRB discussion:** TDRB provided recommendations for native vines for retaining wall. TDRB feels that the new retaining wall heights will not be a major impact.

**Completeness:** McCormick / Post 2<sup>nd</sup> : 5 ayes

**Approval:** McCormick / Post 2<sup>nd</sup> : 5 ayes

**Merits:** New retaining walls will have minimum impact.