

Tam Design Review Board – Minutes
Public Hearing - July 6, 2016
Secretary, Alan Jones

Call to order: 7PM: April Post, chair

Board Members Present: April Post, Alan Jones, John McCormick

Approval of minutes: Minutes for June 15, 2016 were approved 3-0

Public comment on items not on the agenda: Many of those present strongly objected to the short notice received of this meeting. Most received notice only the day before the meeting. They ask that the County change it's procedures so that concerned neighbors be given notice well in advance of our meetings in the future. Many had the feeling that the County was "trying to pull a fast one" and push projects forward without public input. Board members remarked that this has been an ongoing problem. It was likely staff deadlines for completeness as well as the 4th of July holiday and not any devious intentions were responsible for the short notice.

Communications & Correspondence: Chair advised those present that we are advisory only to the Planning staff and that putting their concerns in writing and submitting them to the project planner will ensure that their comments are part of the public record and will attach to the application as it goes through the rest of the approval process.

Public Present at Meeting: Michael Hardiman, Gail Nethercut, Eric Multhaupt, Daniel Giudengorin, Kathy Gildengorin, Heather Page, Adam McAfee, Bill Fridel, Tommy Bilb, Diarro Foster, John Hood, Rodrigo Izquierdo, Sandra Bird

1. Hillenbrand Design Review, Project ID P1258, 342 Laverne, Mill Valley APN 047-181-03

Applicant: Sandra Bird Designs

Planner: Ali Guidice

Design Review approval is requested to add 81 square feet to an existing 6,610 square foot single-family residence on a 34,475 square foot lot in Mill Valley. The proposed development would result in a floor area ratio of 19.4 percent. The building would reach a maximum height of 30.16 feet above surrounding grade and would have the following setbacks from the exterior walls: +94 feet from the southerly front property line; more than 30 feet from the westerly side property line; +37 feet from the easterly side property line; +60 ft from the northerly rear property line.

Design Review approval is required because the building exceeds an area of 4,000 square feet.

Sandra Bird presented plans for the applicant. Small addition to the existing house to add a bathroom and enlarge a bedroom. Location is not disruptive to neighbors. Material and design to match (E) house. Size of lot is adequate so FAR is not an issue.

Found complete and approved as submitted: McCormick, Jones 3-0

2. Gildengorin Design Review and Variance, Project ID P1260, 217 Cleveland, Mill Valley APN 051-172-19

Applicant: John Hood

Planner: Tammy Taylor

The applicant requests Design Review and Second Unit approval to demolish an existing 1,606 square foot house and 190 square foot garage and construct a new 5,559 square foot house and second unit on a lot in Mill Valley. The 5,559 square feet of proposed development would result in a floor area ratio of 35 percent on the 15,668.63 square foot lot. The proposed building would reach a maximum height of 28 feet 1 inch above surrounding grade and pool house would reach a maximum height of 25 feet above grade. The main house and second unit would have the following setbacks from the exterior walls: 5 feet from the north west front property line; 6 feet from the north east side property line; 6 feet from the south west side property line; 35 feet from the south east rear property line. The pool house would have the following setbacks from the exterior walls: 76 feet from the north west front property line; approximately 116 feet

from the north east side property line; 6 feet from the south west side property line; 21 feet from the south east rear property line.

The project is subject to the Variance chapter of the Development Code because the project is in a conventional zoning district in the Tamalpais Area and proposes to exceed the 22% Adjusted Floor Area Ratio per the Tamalpais Community Plan and section 22.30.060 of the Marin County Development Code. Therefore, a Variance will be required as per section 22.54.010 of the Marin County Development Code.

Plans presented by John Hood. Updated plans were shown to the board and applicant assures us that they would be submitted to County. The entry area has been modified so as to not trigger the "cathedral ceiling" concerns noted below. Applicant takes exception to the description of the project provided by the planner. He maintains: a) That the Civil drawings verify that the slope of the site is approximately 24.9 % and hence the slope limitations of the Tam Plan do not apply and b) that the FAR of the proposed project at 4568 sq ft is 29.25% which is less than the required 30% and that therefore c) a variance is not required. Applicant asserts that the new total area is 4568 sq ft including the pool house and 570 sq ft second unit. He has not counted approximately 495 sq ft of "cathedral ceiling" space in the Living Room based on the assumption that the average plate height of the first floor is 9'-0" and therefore the remainder of the 16 ft ceiling height does not exceed 7' -6". The applicant and the Planner asked us for our advice as to how to interpret this. The issue was at what height does one begin to make the calculation. After discussion TDRB agreed that since the ceiling height is between 9 and 10 ft throughout the rest of the home, a calculation beginning at the 9' height would be appropriate, and eliminate the 7.5 additional heights that would trigger the extra FAR. Additionally, the configuration of the house would not lend itself to a second floor expansion.

Cut and fill as described but not clearly shown on plans are said to be approximately balanced. A 6 ft retaining wall is provided at the cut near the front of the property and a 4 ft retaining wall with a fence on the top is provided at the fill at the rear of the property. It is anticipated that a 2-3 ft retaining wall to stabilize the street will be needed along the edge of the street on the right of way but this is not included in this application. A 6 ft fence along the street is also anticipated but not shown. Plans show several large trees to be removed but applicant did not have details on these trees.

Summary of neighbor's comments: The site has much seepage of water in winter rains due to underlying soil conditions. Development could present a severe flooding hazard to downhill property. House appears to be much too large for the neighborhood. Not consistent with other houses on the street. Other construction projects in the neighborhood have gone far past anticipated schedule and proven very disruptive to neighbors. Artist next door fears his work will be disrupted during construction as dust has been a problem with existing construction. Location of rear yard and pool could be disturbing to adjacent property owners.

Board members comments: Question the appropriateness of a pool during a drought. Not clear about the proximity of pool and rear yard to neighbors and what screening, if any, is planned. If indeed the slope, as asserted by applicant, is barely under the limit which would otherwise trigger a dramatically lower FAR, is this an indication that the size of the house is too large for the site even though it may technically comply? Landscaping and drainage are not clearly indicated on the plans. TDRB feels that applicant's interpretation of the "cathedral ceiling" provision of the Tam Plan is acceptable in this case. In addition to the plate height argument, the house layout makes it highly unlikely that the high ceiling area will ever be developed as habitable space.

Application found incomplete: McCormick, Jones 3-0

Items needed: 1) Neighboring houses shown on site plan; 2) Site sections indicating relationship to neighboring property; 3) View from down slope; 4) Detailed landscape plan; 5) Copy of soils report; 6) Detailed drainage plan indicating how runoff will be collected and dispersed on site; 7) Size and type of trees to be removed; 8) Detailed grading plan including cut and fill calculations.

TDRB strongly recommends and applicant has agreed to meet with any concerned neighbors and explain in detail how the project will impact their property.