

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 15th, 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