

Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Design Review Board

March 13, 2017, 12:30 p.m.

City Manager's Conference Room, 8130 Allison Avenue, La Mesa, CA

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Soutowood called a regular meeting of the Design Review Board to order at 12:35 p.m. in the City Council Chambers at 8130 Allison Avenue, La Mesa, California.

ATTENDANCE

Members Attending: Chairman Soutowood, Board members Dick, Hulitt, Jacobs, and McCullough.

Absent: None.

Visitors: Arnold Schmidt, Luis Naranjo, Rick Vandervort, John Howard, Bruce Robertson and Jim Thornton representing DRB 14-18.

Ian Gill, Jim Reynolds, Richard Benson, Jake Reynolds, Neil Healey, Loretta Young, Randall Bohl, Gio Posillico, Dolvin Buchanan, and Tommy Edmunds representing DRB 16-18.

Interested public: Gene Carpenter, Jean Costa, Ken Benell, Daniel Booth, James Kelly, Larry Kelly, Marie Conrad, Glen Richter, Kerry Minch, Preston Turegan, Shannon Dubrand, Bradley Debreuil, Lili Feingold, Gisela Salgado, Dinah Justice, Lydia Phillips, and Austin Dias.

Staff: Associate Planner Kinnard.

INFORMATION ITEMS None.

BUSINESS

Design Review Board DRB 14-18 (Arnold & Valerie Schmidt Revocable Trust) – Consideration of a proposed mixed-use condominium project at El Cajon Boulevard and Thorne Drive in the C-D-MU (General Commercial/Urban Design Overlay/ Mixed-Use Overlay) and R3-MU (Multiple Unit Residential / Mixed-Use Overlay) zones. The project utilizes State Density Bonus Provisions.

Senior Planner Jacobs summarized the staff report. The project applicant presented an overview of the subject project.

Resident Preston Turegan, Foxhaven HOA President, stated a concern about traffic.

Resident Jean Costa supports the project and asked about the number of families that would be displaced from the mobile home park.

Resident Ken Benell stated that he did not want a low income, high density project exempt from CEQA.

Daniel Booth, former Aragon HOA President, expressed concern about parking, and wants the gate open on Troy Terrace at Montebello South.

Arnold Schmidt, applicant, discussed outreach to the neighbors including St. Martin of Tours, as well as edge conditions of the project site.

Board member Hulitt discussed the Thorne Drive street wall, the commercial layout of Montebello South, and asked about the building colors and landscape treatment near Troy Terrace.

Board member Soutowood asked that the materials board be updated to include metals such as railings and standing seam metal roofs. He also asked about downspouts, lighting, vines between garage doors and the materials of the inward facing garage doors.

Board member McCullough asked about paving, site walls, and windows. He stated his preference for more native plants with lower water usage.

Board member Hulitt made a motion to recommend approval of the project subject to the following:

- 1) The applicant shall expand the material board to include all proposed materials, including metal materials.
- 2) The applicant shall provide a landscape response along the Troy Terrace frontage of Montebello South to create a softer edge condition for the neighborhood.
- 3) The applicant shall include details of walls / fences, site lighting and paving types in the plans.

Board member McCullough seconded the motion.

Aye: Chairman Soutowood, Board members Dick, Hulitt, Jacobs, and McCullough.

Nay: None.

Absent: None.

Abstain: None.

- b. **DRB 16-18 (Pathfinder Silvergate LLC)** – Consideration of a proposed 130-unit apartment development at the former Little Flower Haven and Chapel located at 8585 La Mesa Boulevard in the RB-D-MU (Residential Business/Urban Design Overlay/Mixed Use Overlay) and R3 (Multiple Unit Residential) zones.

Associate Planner Kinnard presented the staff report.

The applicant described neighborhood outreach efforts. The architect, Richard Benson, summarized the approach: to be compatible with the original architecture and preserve existing massing and setbacks. He said that an enhanced bus stop at the project entrance will activate the street and that the number of trees on the site will be doubled with the project.

Resident Lili Feingold expressed concerns about parking, architectural design, and loss of trees.

Resident Dinah Justice expressed concerns about parking, loss of trees, and light pollution.

Resident Gene Carpenter expressed concerns about parking and the omission of affordable housing in the project.

Resident Larry Kelly expressed concerns about parking, grading, and line of sight. He noted that lowering the pad of the rear buildings by two feet would remove the need for a special permit.

Board member McCullough noted a lack of trees within the parking lot area and suggested the use of finger planters to provide shade cover.

Chairman Soutowood asked questions about the dog walk area, pedestrian pathways, and bell tower. He suggested that a different color palette be applied to the new buildings, that parking areas be adjusted to preserve trees, and that a wider line of sight be provided from the street into the property. He suggested that the architecture would be enhanced by more push/pull articulation, by a break in the street façade, and by less rigorous symmetry.

Board member Hulitt said that trees need to be concentrated around the edges of the site. He was supportive of density in this area and praised the incorporation of historic buildings. He suggested that the shaped parapets appeared inauthentic and noted awkward relationships between buildings.

There was discussion among the Board as to whether the new street-fronting building should be brought forward toward the street and/or separated from the original building to frame the historic resource.

Board member McCullough made a motion to approve the project as shown on the plans dated December 1, 2016, with the following condition:

- 1) The applicant shall add landscaped fingers in the parking areas to provide additional shade canopy.

Chairman Soutowood seconded the motion.

Aye: Board members Dick, Jacobs, and McCullough.
Nay: Chairman Soutowood and Board member Hulitt.
Absent: None.
Abstain: None.

c. Approval of the minutes from the February 27, 2017 meeting.

Board member Soutowood made a motion to approve the February 27, 2017 minutes. Board member Hulitt seconded the motion.

Aye: Chairman Soutowood, Board members Dick, Hulitt, Jacobs, and McCullough.
Nay: None.
Absent: None.
Abstain: None.

PUBLIC DISCUSSION AND AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION None.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Chris Jacobs, Senior Planner