

TOWN OF HILLSBOROUGH
SAN MATEO COUNTY

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1600 Floribunda Avenue
Hillsborough
California 94010

**Architecture and Design Review Board
Minutes**

June 7, 2004

Town Hall, 1600 Floribunda Avenue – Community Room

CALL TO ORDER – 4:00 p.m.

Boardmembers Present – Reisman, Jewett, Luebkehan, Werbe and Benoit (Boardmember Benoit served as a full voting member)

Boardmembers Absent – Heyman

Staff Present – Morton, O'Connell and Chan

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – A motion (Jewett/Benoit) to approve the minutes of May 17, 2004 passed 3-0-2. (Luebkehan and Werbe did not vote since they had not attended the meeting on May 17, 2004.)

PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS

- 1. 25 Bluebell Lane** —Smith/Tien (Regrid Power/Christopher Tripoli Architect)
Roof-mounted solar panels on the front of house

Boardmember Jewett said that he was pleased to see the letters of support from the neighbors. He pointed out that the proposed panels are at the front of the house. He asked if this was the only reasonable approach, and if it was, he would grudgingly approve the application.

Boardmember Werbe said that the Board had a policy about not approving solar panels on the front of the house unless they were well screened.

Boardmember Luebkehan said that although he is in favor of solar power and he appreciates that letters have been received by the neighbors who are most impacted, that the ADRB needs to represent the entire community, and he did not think that placing solar panels at a very visible

location was consistent with the community values. He asked if the panels could be screened or if there could be another configuration. Boardmember Luebkehan believed that if solar panels were used that they should be integrated into the architecture. Although energy efficiency is a positive thing, the aesthetics also need to be considered. Boardmember Benoit pointed out that the roof is relatively flat and, therefore, she would like to see options including placing the panels elsewhere on the roof. She said that having the panels at the front of the house was not a good look, and she agreed with Boardmember Luebkehan that the ADRB represented the entire community. Although the neighbors have indicated their support, she felt that the issue was bigger than just support of adjacent neighbors.

Chairman Reisman reiterated that it has been the ADRB's policy not to have solar panels on the front of a roof. Some have been approved where there is sufficient screening. He pointed out that upon entering this cul-de-sac the panels would be in plain view from the street, and that, although there is a tree shown in the photographs, it's off to the side and does not really effectively screen the panels from view. He stated that he would not be able to support the project, but rather than deny the project, he would like to have the applicants work with the Board to find a way that the panels could be used, possibly the application could be revised to provide screening or a different location or a way in which the panels could be integrated into the architecture. Chairman Reisman was concerned that if this project was approved as submitted that a precedent would be set.

The applicant responded that the southwest orientation was the best exposure for the panels. He stated that if the panels were placed on the back of the roof they would have to be tilted up. He said that the panels are designed to last 30-40 years. He also pointed out that there were a total of six (6) houses on this cul-de-sac and four (4) of the adjoining property owners have provided letters indicating that they have no opposition to this project.

There was a question about the tree which was shown in the photos to screen the panels, to which the applicant responded that from November to early February there would not be leaves on the tree.

Staff asked the applicant if it would be possible for the frame of the panel to be black rather than silver. The applicant responded that it was a possibility.

Boardmember Werbe said that she would like to have the applicant try putting them on the backside of the roof and screening them. Boardmember Luebkehan agreed, saying again that the applicant's business was selling panels, but the Board's business was community aesthetics. He would like the applicants to work with their architect to come up with a way of better integrating the panels into the architecture.

Boardmember Benoit agreed, saying that this particular panel could not be much less attractive, and it negatively affects the curb appeal of the house. She believed that a redesign of the project would be a win-win for both the Town and the homeowner.

Boardmember Jewett pointed out that if landscaping was used to screen the panels it would have to be substantial. But the Board generally agreed that a way of integrating the panels more into the architecture would be a more successful solution.

A motion (Benoit/Jewett) to continue the application to the July 19, 2004 meeting passed 5-0.

2. 611 Fairway Circle—Cabrera (EASA Architecture)

First and second floor additions of 1,348 square feet, including second unit and solar panels

Boardmember Luebkehan did not participate in the discussion of this item as he had missed the previous meeting.

Boardmember Werbe said that there was a great deal about this house that he liked. However, she was not fond of the tiles. She thought that the massing and the detailing were fine, but believed that the balcony rail was too ornate. She urged that the applicant consider more variation in the color of the roof tiles. She believed that the wall color may appear too orange in the field.

Boardmember Benoit said that she agreed that the roof tiles needed additional variation and color. She liked the concept of the wall tiles but not necessarily the color choice. She believed that the yellow color “fights” with the orange color. She also pointed out that the grey trim color could be more green and less of a “cold grey color”. She asked that the wall color be softened and stated that the scale of the light fixtures may be too small. She further added that the plans were difficult to read and agreed with Boardmember Werbe on the ornate ironwork.

Boardmember Jewett agreed with the other Boardmembers regarding the tiles saying that they were a little “over the top”. He also agreed on the previous comments about the house color and the ironwork. He questioned the proposed solar panel saying that they didn’t appear to be well screened and that they ran all the way across the front.

Chairman Reisman asked if these solar panels are intended to replace the existing panels, to which the applicant responded affirmatively. Chairman Reisman said that he had some sympathy for something that was already there but pointed out that the covered walkway element is very nice and asked if the panels could be integrated better so that they are not so visible. He asked staff for an update on the illegal construction in the garage. Staff responded that it had apparently been removed, but the final inspection had not yet been done by the Building Department. Chairman Reisman provided a summary of the comments on the colors and roof tiles. He stressed that in general it appeared that the Board supported the design and would require only minor revisions; the Board’s focus on the colors and tiles was a positive thing. He agreed that mottling the wall color similar to the way the wall is depicted in the rendering would help. He commented that the sample of the roof tile appeared to be shiny and agreed that the grey trim color should be a warmer color. He further said that he admired the architect for his creativity in using the tiles on the turret in the windows, but he felt that it was a little overdone. He suggested reducing the amount of the tile and possibly changing the color choice. He reiterated his support of the unique design.

A motion (Werbe/Jewett) to approve the project subject to the applicant returning to the July 19, 2004 ADRB meeting for final approval of the color board, including the tiles, the roof material (less shiny and more variegated), the diamond tiles of the different color, a mottled treatment on the wall, and a change in the trim color passed 4-0-1. (Luebkehan abstained.)

3. 1045 Whitwell Road—Murphy (Stewart Associates)

Remodel and additions includes landscape plan

A neighbor from 1060 Whitwell Road (Mr. Burns) spoke in support of the project. He said that he had reviewed the plans and believed that the project was an improvement of the current house.

Boardmember Luebke stated that it appeared that the architect had addressed all the Board's comments from the preliminary review. He said that this was a unique site. He further stated that although it was a large house that the beautiful Oak tree would soften the visual affect of the house. He stressed that this house will make a statement in the neighborhood.

Boardmembers Benoit, Jewett, and Werbe agreed that the design was very nice and complimented the architect on addressing their previous concerns.

Chairman Reisman asked about the material shown for the roof of the dormers, to which the architect responded that it was copper. Chairman Reisman said that this was a much nicer home than what is on the site currently, and it appeared to be well suited to the lot.

Staff asked the applicant if he would plan to increase the house size if he acquired the Town property adjacent to the lot, to which the applicant responded that he would not. Staff also clarified that it would be a condition of approval that if the adjacent Town-owned property was not acquired by this applicant, that the applicant would be required to remove the private improvements on the Town's property.

A motion (Werbe/Jewett) to approve the project with the clarification that the house would not increase in size if the applicant acquired the adjacent Town-owned property, and that if the property was not acquired that the applicant would remove the private improvements from the property passed 5-0.

ADJOURNMENT – 5:00 p.m.

Maureen Morton, AICP
City Planner