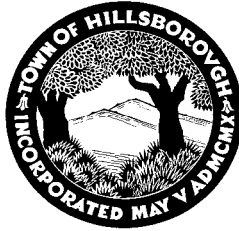


TOWN OF HILLSBOROUGH
SAN MATEO COUNTY

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1600 Floribunda Avenue
Hillsborough
California 94010

**Architecture and Design Review Board
Minutes
September 20, 2004**

Town Hall, 1600 Floribunda Avenue – Community Room

CALL TO ORDER – 4:00 p.m.

Boardmembers Present - Reisman, Jewett, Luebke, Werbe and Benoit (serving as a full voting member)

Boardmembers Absent - Heyman

Staff Present – Morton, O'Connell, Milke

Others Present – Commissioner John Fannon

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – A motion (Werbe/Jewett) to approve the minutes of August 16, 2004 passed 5-0.

PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS

Consent Calendar:

Landscape Plans

1. **2245 Skyfarm Drive** – Cha/Stamos (Michael Callan, Landscape Architect)
New fencing and gates
2. **1595 Kingswood Drive** – Hsu (Michael Callan, Landscape Architect)
New fencing and gates

Revisions to Previously Approved Plans

3. **625 Barbara Way** - Chen (HA Group, Inc./Michael Callan, Landscape Architect)
Revisions to previously approved new house including relocation of the house on the site and revised landscaping, gates, fencing, and new retaining walls (20% FAR)

A motion (Benoit/Jewett) to approve the consent calendar passed 5-0.

Discussion Items:

Remodels/Additions

- 4. 1485 Bairn Drive** – Wesendunk (Phillip R. Dixon Architect)
Second floor addition (19% FAR)

The consensus of the Board was that, while not overly offensive, this design requires more attention to detail. They believe that it could be a better design and look less like a dated addition onto a dated house. They believed that the overall aesthetic was weak and asked that the staff approve a revised and improved design administratively.

A motion (Benoit/Jewett) to approve the project subject to addressing the Board's concerns about improving the level of architectural detail, subject to the approval by staff (if staff is not comfortable approving revised plans the application would return to the ADRB), passed 5-0.

Landscape Plans

- 5. 790 El Cerrito Avenue** – Rossa (Ransohoff Blanchfield Jones, Inc.)
Revisions to previously approved landscape plan including new 8-foot fence, entry gate and screening plantings

The Board generally agreed that the gate and the garage door redesign were improvements to the site. There was mixed opinion about the 8-foot high fence, but the applicant's representative explained her opinion of why it was necessary.

A motion (Luebkehan/Jewett) to approve the project as submitted passed 5-0.

Revisions to Previously Approved Plans

- 6. 15 Glenbrook Drive** – De Guzman (Winges Architects, Inc.)
Revisions to roofing material for previously approved new house

Boardmember Jewett indicated that he would prefer the two-piece roofing material which had originally been approved, but that he would not vote against this revised application.

A motion (Benoit/Luebkehan) to approve the project passed 4-0-1. (Werbe did not participate due to a potential conflict of interest.)

- 7. 10 Scott Court** - Gomez (Peter Lam, AIA Architects, Ltd.)
Revisions to previously approved new house including conversion of previously unfinished areas to living area; changes to exterior including new column and trim details (23% FAR)

Boardmember Luebkehan said that he believed that the proposed modifications were somewhat of a trade-off, but overall, he had no problems with them.

Boardmember Benoit believed that the detail of the wrought iron should be further simplified, but she said that the columns added some architectural interest. She supported the concept of finding the additional floor space.

Boardmember Jewett said that he believed these changes improved the project.

Boardmember Werbe said that she agreed with Boardmember Benoit about the ironwork, that it could be further simplified. She complimented this property owner for working so beautifully with the neighbors on this project.

Chairman Reisman said that he was not overly supportive of this project as it did not represent an authentic mix of detailing. He believed that it was somewhat of a hodgepodge and needed further authenticity. He did point out, however, that this house was not visible from the street. He asked the architect to work further to improve the consistency in detailing.

A motion (Werbe/Luebkeman) to approve the application passed 5-0.

Remodels/Additions

8. 20 Longview Court – Chan (Gumbinger Avram Architects) Second floor addition (22% FAR)

A neighbor (Mr. Shays) at 858 Longview Road spoke saying that this neighborhood was really a positive one in which neighbors look out for each other. This project is difficult in that it appears that the applicant is only out for his own good. He asked the ADRB to look into options so that this results in a win/win situation for the applicant and the neighboring property owners.

Dr. Johns at 850 Longview Road spoke saying that this application was merely a resubmittal of a 1992 project which had been denied because it was not consistent with the context of the neighborhood and it was too tall. He showed the ADRB a photograph. He indicated that the neighbor had asked him about the possibility of this addition about five (5) years ago. At that time, Dr. Johns had told the neighbor to go to Town Hall and review the property files. He also said that he had prepared a study by a civil engineer (which he passed out to the ADRB and the staff). He said that it was his opinion that the building is 10 feet over the natural grade; that the site was a result of a massive landfill and pointed out that this house sits above the street level.

Chairman Reisman summarized Dr. Johns comments by saying that he had two main points: one was about the grade of the property, and the second was about the reference to the previous application. Apparently, Dr. Johns believes that there were 10 feet of landfill compacted resulting in an overall height of 31½ feet.

Ms. Ho at 860 Vista Road spoke against the project indicating that this would set a precedent in their neighborhood which can now be described as having harmony, beauty and subtlety. She pointed out that the neighbors had a deep sense of respect for each other and suggested that there was another solution to this applicant's request for an addition.

Ms. Manning at 855 Longview Road spoke in opposition to the project saying that when she had redesigned her home she did it in a manner that was consistent with the neighborhood.

Another speaker from 835 Longview Road said that she was unable to prepare a letter in advance of the deadline. She believed that the house was too close to the front of the property, and that the result would be massive. She suggested that the addition should be setback from the street, and then she would not be opposed to it.

A neighbor (Ms. Benz) at 25 Longview Court spoke saying that she had completed the remodel of her home and avoided putting a full second-story as a way to honor the neighborhood. She also said that in this neighborhood everyone supports one another.

Ms. Tankel at 870 Longview Road spoke in opposition to the project saying she believed that it was not compatible with the neighborhood.

Boardmember Benoit said she had spent a lot of time reading the letters and visiting the neighborhood. She would like to commend the neighbors for so well organizing their thoughts. Boardmember Benoit believed that, from the street, the design was good, that the massing was attractive, and it did not appear to be an addition. Therefore, she felt that it conformed well to the design guidelines. But with regard to the bulk, she believed this was a three-story house. She pointed out that this house had been designed as a two-story home and from the back it was clearly a two-story home in function. She believed that adding a third-story in the neighborhood was not acceptable. With regard to parking, she advised the audience that this was something that the ADRB looks at. When she visited the site, there were two or three cars in the street; there is very limited street frontage to provide for parking on the street. She pointed out that additional sleeping areas are proposed, and that the site did not appear to be able to accommodate the current parking demand. With regard to neighborhood precedent and solidarity, she believed that this neighborhood was dynamic and had changed in a positive way over the previous years. She believed that all the remodels that had been done have been done with sensitivity. She was also concerned that ten years ago a third story was not permitted. With regard to the grading discrepancy, she believed that there were enough questions that this project should not be supported unless the grading issues were resolved.

Boardmember Jewett complimented Boardmember Benoit for her eloquent summary, saying that he agreed with all that she had said. He further said that the design was well executed and would be exceptional in an area that is transition with regard to the bulk and mass. He had concerns about the questions regarding the height; as a result he was not supportive of the application. He had mapped all the opposition and believed that the majority of the neighbors were opposed to the project. He did not believe that this neighborhood was one in transition with regard to height and mass. He said that many of the lots are smaller, and although this lot is larger, it has a tennis court which occupies 8,000 square feet of its lot area. When he visited the site, there were three cars in the street, three in the garage and three on the lot. He believed that it would be unacceptable to add additional dwelling space and further impact the neighborhood with regard to parking.

Boardmember Werbe indicated that she was also opposed to this project. She had witnessed the same parking issues, and in fact had visited the site three different times. She didn't understand how this property owner could apply for a project like this and appear not to care about the Town. She was concerned that this was an incorrect attempt, and it violated the solidarity and positive feelings that are representative of this neighborhood.

Boardmember Luebke agreed that the architect had done a good job in integrating the addition into the existing home. He pointed out that he believed that this neighborhood is in transition in that there have been a lot of changes in the neighborhood, but they had not added mass or bulk. He agreed that parking was a big issue and concluded that there were too many factors against this application to warrant his support.

Chairman Reisman said that many things have been said about this application, and that the ADRB members tend to mention things that are a concern. One of his issues is the number of bedrooms and cars, and that this application does not conform to the parking standard that the ADRB has typically applied to projects. He believed that it was obvious that this lot is incapable of handling the number of cars associated with this house. He clarified for the audience that the ADRB considers applications based on a number of factors. He does appreciate that the design is well integrated into the house, and the view from the street does not appear to be a problem. The view from the

neighbor's house (Johns) is higher, and that there are a great number of factors for the ADRB to consider in this application.

The project architect said that she realizes that this has become an emotional issue in the neighborhood. She disagreed with the comment that this application was continuing the previous history. She pointed out that this application included two (2) additional parking spaces on the side, and this application does not have the luxury of a new project on a vacant lot – there is a tennis court which has been there for 12 years. She concluded by saying that this project is consistent with the Hillsborough Code. She asked the project civil engineer to review for the ADRB the issue about the grade.

Mr. George Salk said that his analysis was based on a survey which he had conducted in the field and by review of the original building plans done by Jack McCarthy.

Boardmember Benoit said that this is basically already a two-story home in a neighborhood of one-story homes. She pointed out that even if an application meets every provision of the Code, the Board may not necessarily approve the application. She stated that the ADRB is expected to make judgments for the good of the neighborhood and the good of the Town.

A motion (Jewett/Werbe) to deny the project based on the following findings passed 5-0:

1. Including the addition, the house would have 6 bedrooms plus a poolhouse and almost 8,000 square feet of floor area, while the proposal includes only a three-car garage. The ADRB has typically required, unless there are overriding site situations, a four-car garage for a 6-bedroom house. The Boardmembers observed, on more than one site visit, that the parking spaces are not sufficient for the current house size and believed that to increase the house size and add bedrooms would further impact the neighborhood.
2. The application is not consistent with the Design Guidelines in that the proposed massing of the addition to the existing house, which the ADRB considered to be a 3-story house, is not consistent with other homes in the immediate neighborhood and this house at this location does not represent a transition with regard to massing.

New Houses

9. 2778 Ralston Avenue - White (Hunt Hale Jones Architects)

New house and landscape plan including fencing and gates along the street (12% FAR)

The applicant reviewed some of the key aspects of the project, including that the floor area ratio (FAR) is 12%. This indicates that this lot could technically accommodate a much larger house. He clarified that the driveway on Ralston Avenue is the primary driveway. The applicant stated that, in fact, the lot line was adjusted to accommodate a driveway at this location. The driveway on Chateau Drive is an emergency access only. He further explained that this was not an estate lot such as those further up the hill on Ralston. He said that this is a transition area between lower Hillsborough and the upper estate lots.

Mr. Kaiser at 2835 Ralston Avenue spoke saying that this house was almost as tall as the Code allows, and that it would be highly visible. He further believed that it was aggressive with regard to the setbacks, and that other houses in the neighborhood were not as large and not as "looming". He said that he saw no articulation of the mass, and he believed that the silhouette broke the ridgeline of the hill. He further indicated that he did not believe that the driveway on Chateau Drive would be a

secondary emergency access. He believes that this house is not consistent with other houses in the neighborhood, and that it should be required to be more creative.

Ms. Meyer at 2855 Ralston Avenue said that she had two deep concerns about this subdivision. She stated that this plan has maximized the height at the setbacks. She also believed that this design was a "cookie cutter" design saying that this was a speculative house, and it will be in conjunction with two other speculative houses, and together they would be an eye sore and embarrassment to the Town. She said that her neighborhood is zoned for two-acre lots, and this lot was the largest of the three in this subdivision. She believes that there are safety issues with regard to the driveway on Ralston Avenue, the parking strip, and the retaining wall that will be required to create the parking strip. She pointed out that there would be a parking strip on both sides of the street which would result in a narrowing of the travel route on Ralston Avenue. She suggested that the applicant place the main driveway on Chateau Drive. She further said that she was promised that all construction vehicles would remain on site, and this was not so during the recent tree removal.

Ms. Kaiser at 2835 Ralston Avenue spoke saying she believed that the house was massive, and it did not consider the natural topography of the site. She would like to see the project scaled back with regard to size and bulk. She believed that this design has a "Blackhawk" style. She would like more of a natural style. She pointed out that there had been numerous near accidents with traffic on Ralston Avenue. She believed that the parking strip would further block the view of vehicles exiting driveways on Ralston Avenue.

Ms. Johnson at 35 New Place Road spoke saying that she was concerned about the way the proposed house was located and the setbacks so close to the next planned home. She urged the ADRB to defer approval until the next two houses have been submitted for their review. She pointed out that these three lots were very visible and were located at a major entrance to the Town. She stated that there are no remaining trees to screen what will be three very prominent houses. She pointed out that it would take twenty years for trees to sufficiently screen the new houses at that location. She believed that the three new houses at this location would result in an outcry from the community. She urged the ADRB to not feel pressured and reminded them that their goal is to do the right thing for the Town of Hillsborough.

Ms. Dyer at 3000 Ralston Avenue spoke saying that she believed that Ralston Avenue is the most dangerous road in Hillsborough. She said that, because of this development, all the trees were gone as are all the birds and the hawks. She believed that a one-story home would be appropriate at this location.

Mr. Kenner at 2800 Ralston Avenue spoke saying that there are not a great deal of neighbors to this property because many of the lots are two acres in size. He believed that this application represented a very abrupt transition. He agreed that, in order for a proper assessment to be made, all three applications needed to be reviewed at one time. He also expressed concerns about the traffic.

Mr. Stein at 2715 Ralston Avenue spoke saying that he would like to look at this house and the next one at one time. He believed that, based on the story poles, the second house would block his view of the first.

Chairman Reisman commented that the speakers were intelligently prepared and articulate.

Boardmember Jewett explained to the audience that driveway issues, possible access onto Chateau Drive and the requirements for parking strips are outside of the ADRB's purview. He believed that there were some legitimate criticisms about the design of the house, but that the drawings and the

plans indicate a high quality of materials, and that the applicant is proposing to use a natural slate roof. He believed that, if this house was built as shown, it would be successful. He recalled that there had been some discussion about massing and siting, and that much of it was driven by the necessity to engineer an appropriate driveway.

Boardmember Werbe said that she believes that the concerns about the driveways are legitimate. She said that if this was her house she would use the driveway on Chateau Drive. She believed that much of the visual impact of this house can be mitigated with landscaping, and that larger trees should be specified on the landscape plan. She agreed with one of the speakers that this house represents a "Blackhawk" style – that it was not custom in design. She believed the entry is too heavy and that it conflicts with the soft and delicate ironwork. She would like the project to take another step towards custom and away from a track-style home.

Boardmember Luebke said that he believed that the house was sited where it is because of the topography. He could understand some comments about the fact that this was a large and bulky inarticulated mass. He also believed that the landscape plan appeared to be somewhat restrained. He was not supportive of the level of detail which he believed was representative of a speculative home.

Boardmember Benoit reiterated that this was a very prominent site. She said that during the preliminary review the ADRB had asked for a more comprehensive view of the three properties. She believed that the design could show more sensitivity to the site.

Chairman Reisman pointed out that the landscape architect had indicated a double and triple row of trees along all of the property lines except for the one between this house and the next house. He mentioned the neighbor's comment about the house being located on the ridgeline. He asked the applicant if the three developers had talked, to which the applicant responded that they had. Chairman Reisman said that he was not overall very pleased. He was concerned that the design had not been refined since the preliminary review. His main concern was that this house was taking a very prime location on the lot with the minimum setback on Chateau Drive. He believed that it was sited aggressively next to the neighboring property, and that the siting could be more creative. He pointed out that the northeast border contained only one row of trees. The applicant explained the reasons for the siting of the house.

Boardmember Benoit said that she would like to understand the siting of the three homes on the three lots and take a look at them in a comprehensive way. She would also like each developer to be able to provide candid input to the Board on what they expected.

Staff suggested that, although it was not legally possible for the ADRB to postpone action on an application which was complete until a future application was made in order for multiple projects to be considered at one time, a study session to look at the three sites might be appropriate. A study session could be held with each of the three developers invited to review their site planning with the ADRB. At the same time the City Engineer could explain to the ADRB the Town's requirements with regard to the layout of the lots, the access, and the public improvements as they relate to the subdivision process.

A motion (Werbe/Jewett) to continue this application to the November 1, 2004 meeting to allow the applicant to address some of the concerns of ADRB, and to allow for a study session with the three developers and their architects, passed 5-0.

The Chairman asked the staff to advise the owner of the adjacent parcel, whose application is on the October 4, 2004 agenda, that more than likely the Board would not be taking final action on his application at that meeting.

OTHER ITEMS

Preliminary Review

New Houses: 870 Vista Road, 75 Sugar Hill Drive, 1345 San Raymundo Road

ADJOURNMENT –

Maureen Morton, AICP
City Planner