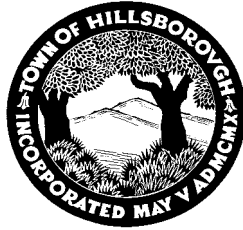


TOWN OF HILLSBOROUGH
SAN MATEO COUNTY

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1600 Floribunda Avenue
Hillsborough
California 94010

**Architecture and Design Review Board
Minutes**
April 18, 2005

Town Hall, 1600 Floribunda Avenue – Community Room

CALL TO ORDER – 4:00 p.m.

Boardmembers Present – Richard Reisman, Walter Heyman, Jennifer Werbe, George Jewett and Kathleen Benoit

Staff Present – Maureen Morton, Gina Tynan and Ray Yniguez

Others Present – Commissioner John Fannon

APPROVAL OF MINUTES — A motion (Werbe/Jewett) to approve the minutes of March 21, 2005 passed 4-1 (Heyman abstained).

PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS

Consent Calendar:

- 1b. 845 Vista Road** – Snyder (Jack McCarthy Architect)
Minor addition of an 86 sf pool house in rear yard and associated landscape plan (19% FAR)
Approved
- 2. 338 El Portal Road** – Pease (James Dixon Architect)
Second floor addition of approximately 858 sf and demolition of existing accessory structures in the rear yard (32% FAR)
Approved
- 3. 15 Annescourt Place** – Karp (Costello Kennedy Landscape Architecture)
Revisions to an approved landscape plan associated with a new house including new front stairs, changes to materials of fencing along the street, and new swimming pool
Continued to May 16, 2005
- 4a. 600 Eucalyptus Avenue** – Miller (Michael Callan, Landscape Architect)
Revisions to previously approved plans for fencing and gates along the street including an increased gate height
Continued off calendar

- 4b. 2700 Ralston Avenue** – Miller (TRG Architects/Michael Callan, Landscape Architect)
New house and landscape plan including a swimming pool, pool house, fencing and columns along the street, a fountain in the front setback, and a new driveway (22% FAR)
Continued off calendar

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

Discussion Items:

- 1a. 725 Jacaranda Circle** – Thorenfeldt (Stewart Associates)
Review of revised color and materials board associated with a teardown and new house

Boardmember Jewett said that he believed that the proposed color for the window frames was too intense and should be more subtle. The remaining Boardmembers did not share that concern. Chairman Reisman noted that it would be in the shadows and that would tone it down some. It was recommended that the applicant test all the colors in the field.

A motion (Benoit/Jewett) to approve the color and materials board passed 4-1. (Jewett dissented.)

Landscape Plans

- 5a. 1040 Crystal Springs Road** – Rosenbaum (Green Design Studio)
Revisions to an approved landscape plan associated with a new house and including new gates and posts along the street

Assistant Planner Gina Tynan reviewed a recent conversation that she had with the Town's Consulting Landscape Architect where he pointed out the proposed planting #11 did not thrive well, and that he still believed that the overall screening of the walls needed to be upgraded. He acknowledged that this site is very challenging, and that the early plans were not prepared to the Town's standards.

There is concern from the Town's Consulting Landscape Architect and the staff that the Stacked block wall has a very negative visual impact, and it appears to be installed backwards (with interior sides facing the street). The Town's Consulting Landscape Architect had further said that the specified Rhododendron is very difficult to find and is not widely available. He urged an upgrade of the sizes of the plants and some different selections.

The property owner indicated frustration with what he believed to be inconsistent feedback from the Town's Consulting Landscape Architect. He said that he had consulted nurseries, residents, landscape architects, and gardeners in the development of this plan and believes that they are within the Town's guidelines. He further explained that the hillside in front of the house would be imported soil, and that the "Versa-lock" block was installed as per the specifications for stairways which resulted in the backside of the block facing the street.

A neighbor at 30 Drayton Road spoke saying that he passed the site everyday, and that he had reviewed the plans and had confidence in the owners and supported the project as designed.

Another speaker at 2095 Ralston Avenue spoke saying she believed the landscape plan was an improvement and recommended that the Board proceed with the plan. She believed that the

property owners would do their best to defend all of the plants that are installed, saying that this was not a speculative house.

Boardmember Werbe said that the house was looking terrific, and that if the rock wall and staircase were hidden by landscaping she would be satisfied.

Boardmember Heyman said that the Town's Consulting Landscape Architect's comments are usually very constructive, and that the ADRB relies on his reports. He suggested that the property owners follow the Town's Consulting Landscape Architect's recommendation. Boardmember Heyman said he had no concerns with the landscape plan, he believed that the suggestions made were sound.

Boardmember Benoit agreed that the house was looking beautiful. She asked about the stairs at the street, and the homeowner replied that rocks or bricks would be added to cover the stairs. Boardmember Benoit said that this was very important due to their high visibility – that it would be important for the portion above ground to look finished. She acknowledged the constraints of the site and indicated that its location would more than likely result in deer visiting the site. She believed that the landscape plan reflected the prairie style of the home. She acknowledged that although some of plants may not survive, she believed the plan was sound.

Boardmember Jewett said that he believed that the Town's Consulting Landscape Architect had some valid points about sizing and deer-resistant species. He asked if the wall height had been addressed.

Chairman Reisman asked if it was Rosemary that was proposed in the front of the wall. He agreed that there had been too many revisions to these plans, and that the important thing was getting the stones covered. He believed that the Board might approve the project subject to addressing the comment related to the three (3) trees and ensuring that the stairs were finished so that the "Versa-lock" reversed stones were not visible from the street.

A motion (Reisman/Werbe) to approve the plan subject to the applicant addressing the comments about the deer-resistant species of the three (3) trees and specifying the finish of the stairs with the understanding that if the planting is not successful that it will be probably replaced and maintained, subject to staff approval passed 5-0.

5b. 570 Pullman Road – Wu (Michael Callan, Landscape Architect)

Revisions to an approved landscape plan to include gold spear tips at fencing installed along the street

Chairman Reisman noted that there was a television camera and reporter present to record this particular item on the agenda. He further indicated that there was a great deal of correspondence related to this particular application. He pointed out to the audience that the ADRB acts on behalf of the Council and is consistent with their policies. He further clarified that the ADRB makes decisions only on aesthetics and any comments related to cultural or social issues should be withheld and all comments should be limited to appearance. He said that it was important that the ADRB and the audience understand that the Board's role is to review aesthetics only and not any possible references to social or cultural preferences.

The applicants thanked the Board for making time to consider this application. They believed that the choice of using gold tips on the fencing was a matter of taste and style, saying that they believed it was an enhancement. They believed that approximately 10% of the homes in Hillsborough have gold coloration on their fencing. They believe that their neighborhood is in

transition and pointed out that neighbors opposing the project had satellite dishes and “penitentiary-like fencing” at their homes. They believed that the majority of the neighborhood supported their application, saying that they had 60 signatures of support for the gold tips. They concluded by saying that they believe this was “much ado about nothing”.

Mr. Mohammad at 465 Darryl Road spoke supporting the application saying it was beautiful and the additional color makes it more beautiful and adds value to the neighborhood. He said that he wished that he had a fence so that he could put gold on it.

Mr. Rheume at 645 Pullman Road said that he wished that this family were his neighbors because they are so nice. He believes that this is a very minor issue. He pointed out that this house used to be a small house and now it’s the nicest house on the street, and that this issue makes no sense to him.

Ms. Oskny at 485 Barbara Way stated that she was the mortgage broker who sold this house to the applicants. She believed that they have put a great deal of effort into the design of this house. She doesn’t understand why the Town would not allow the gold tips saying that they remind her of the curve in the road when she drives in this area and believes they enhance safety. She believes that they enhance the beauty of the property.

Boardmember Heyman stated that taste and style are very subjective. He referenced, however, the long-standing policy of the ADRB to not approve gold tips on fence spears. He said that the ADRB had been advised that not a single approval has been made in over ten (10) years, and he doesn’t see why the ADRB would change that policy today.

Boardmember Benoit said that, while she understood the homeowners desire to have an individual statement, she believed that it is important, as reflected in the Design Guidelines, that there be an understated elegance as an overall goal in Hillsborough. She did not believe that the gold tips on this fence or any other fence reflected that goal.

Boardmember Jewett said that he would like to acknowledge the thoughtful comments made by the applicant and the neighbors. However, he believed that there had been a long-standing policy, of possibly 15 years or more, of not approving gold-tip spears. He cited an incidence where he was working on a gate for his house about 12 years ago and was told that gold-tip features were not approved by the ADRB. He believed that the only place in which gold-tip spears might be appropriate is on some of the historical homes in Town where an antiqued gold tip was reflective of a historical architectural style. He agreed with Boardmember Benoit that the goal of the Town is an understated, elegant aesthetic with which these tips are not consistent.

Boardmember Werbe said that she concurred with the other Boardmembers. She did believe that this house was beautiful. She felt that the homeowners had done a wonderful job with the home, but she did not believe that this was the time to go against a policy of the ADRB that had been in affect for more than ten (10) years.

Chairman Reisman summarized by saying that sometimes a long-standing policy makes the ADRB’s decisions easier. He pointed out that there are some instances, such as the City Hall in San Francisco, possibly the Carolands Mansion, where an antiqued gold-tipped spear features on a fence may be appropriate where there is a historic base for that design feature. He believed that there are other ways to achieve greatness in design. He acknowledged the thoughtfulness and the likeability of the applicants. He believed, however, that even without the long-standing policy he would not be supportive of this application.

The homeowner asked about the fairness of not allowing their proposal for gold-tipped spear features on their fencing when they had supplied addresses of numerous fences in Hillsborough that include the gold tips. They asked if they were being singled out.

Staff responded that this request is different than pre-existing gold-tipped spear features on fencing in that the design of the fence in front of this new house was subject to the Design Review Board's approval. The plans that the Board approved did not specify that the spear tips would be gold. If they had specified that, staff would alert the applicant to the Board's policy against such features. Staff further stated that it is required that applicants install projects as per approved plans, and in this case it will not be possible for the Building Inspector to issue a final approval on the installation of fencing that does not match the approved plans. With regard to other homes in Hillsborough which have gold tips on their fencing, this could be something that happened before the Board's policy, or the painting could have occurred subsequent to the initial installation of the fencing. The Town does not regulate repainting of fences. Once a project receives its final inspection, there is no discretionary approval required for the future repainting of houses or fences. So it would be possible, in some instances, that an owner may elect to paint a house or a fence after receiving final sign-off on the project from the Town."

A motion (Heyman/Jewett) to deny the application on the basis that it does not reflect the understated elegance of Hillsborough, and it is not consistent with the Town's Design Guidelines passed 5-0.

Additions/Remodels

6. 35 Bel Aire Court – Rubenstein (Cornelia Griffin Architect)

Second floor addition of approximately 850 sf and ground-floor additions of approximately 345 sf (25% FAR)

A neighbor at 25 Bel Aire Court (Linda Woo) spoke with concern about possible impacts on privacy. She stated that her home had no windows on the upstairs on that side of the house, and she believed that the new windows of this house would look into their home. She believed that the project would benefit from having the new mass more centered on the house.

A neighbor at 30 Anguido Court said that this house is unique with this U-shape. He pointed out, however, that the addition appears to be one-sided, and that it lacks balance. He would like to see the addition shifted to better enhance the overall design.

Boardmember Benoit said that generally the ADRB likes to see the massing more in the center of the home. However, she pointed out that this house has a clear contemporary style, and she believed that the addition was well incorporated into the existing house. Her only concern was that the quality of the solarium should match that of the rest of the house and be a custom job rather than a manufactured product.

Boardmember Jewett said that he was not supportive of the massing and balance. He believed that the height of the addition, in relation to the existing house to remain, was very severe. He believed that additional design work was needed.

Boardmember Werbe said that the Board had reviewed a similar project on Black Mountain Road a year or so ago where the original design showed a similar massing pattern. That applicant returned to the Board with adjustments to the mass resulting in an acceptable and lovely project. She believed that this design was too asymmetrical and that the addition looked too much like a tower, and that additional balance was needed. She also pointed out that the roofing material

that had been specified was not an elegant one. She also echoed the concerns about the proposed solarium saying that it would be important for it to have a custom look.

Boardmember Heyman said that he did not share the concerns about the addition. He did question whether or not there was sufficient space on the site to allow for larger screening trees. He pointed out that at 25% FAR the ADRB standards are higher. He echoed the concern about the solarium, saying that it appeared to be an element of discord in the overall design. He believed that it needed to be more consistent with the home, especially since it directly faces the neighbor at the rear.

Chairman Reisman also pointed out that the house with the addition is at 25% FAR, and that the ADRB has typically required that design efforts ascend to a higher level for houses of this size. He believed that the colors were dated, and that the design represented a massing too off-balance. He also referenced the previous application of a house on Black Mountain Road. He agreed with the previous comments of the Boardmembers and believed that the project needed additional design work.

A motion (Werbe/Jewett) to continue this application to the June 6, 2005 meeting to allow the architect to address the Board's concerns including the issues of balance and symmetry and customizing the solarium passed 5-0.

New Houses

- 7. 70 Joyce Road** – Miller (TRG Architects/Michael Callan, Landscape Architect)
New house of approximately 5,936 sf on a vacant lot and associated landscape plan including new fencing and gates along the street, new driveway cut and tree removals (24% FAR)

The project architect pointed out that stone work had been added since the Board's preliminary review of this project. He said that the design goal was to make this house neighbor friendly with its one-story elements and landscape screening.

The project landscape architect said that there appeared to be some discrepancy between what trees the neighbors wanted to remain, recommendations of the arborist and the recommendations of the Town's Consulting Landscape Architect. He pointed out that this site has a great deal of mature vegetation.

A neighbor at 60 Joyce Road (Mr. Chagaris) spoke saying that his house was one story. He was pleased with the design of this new home, but he had concerns about the landscaping. He pointed out that the trees along his property line are overgrown, and that he has been trimming them on his side of the property resulting in trees that are askew. He admitted that he also had concerns about privacy and understood that there needed to be a balance between privacy issues and overgrown trees that need to be thinned.

Mr. Moore at 1485 Kingswood Road referred to the letter he had written to the Board. He stated that his main concern was the height of the project. His property is approximately six (6) feet lower than the subject property, and although he has landscape screening, he is concerned about the overall height of the project.

Boardmember Jewett said that he believed that this was a very nice application package including the house design and the landscape plan. He believed that the maintenance and the required trimming of the trees could be addressed. He recommended that the ADRB support the recommendations of the Town's Consulting Landscape Architect.

Boardmember Werbe agreed that the plans were beautiful. She addressed the neighbor's concerns by explaining that the view of the story poles tend to be very jarring – more so than the actual building when it's built with lovely materials and the overall height is just the high point in a roof ridge. She stated that she was able to support the project.

Boardmember Heyman pointed out that this project is at 25% FAR resulting in a higher standard in the ADRB's review. He liked the style of the home but was not sure what it was called. He pointed out that if the roof was lowered, it would destroy the architectural style. He asked if the roof was slate or tile, and the architect responded that it was a grey-colored concrete tile. Boardmember Heyman pointed out that the roof on this style is extremely prominent and visual, and that the roofing needed to have texture, variation and shadow. Boardmember Heyman further admitted to some confusion about the trees of the project saying that it appeared the neighbor wanted trees #36 through #41 retained, while the Town's Consulting Landscape Architect believed that #41 should be removed. He would like the applicant to address the neighbor's concerns about the need for maintenance and trimming of the trees and asked if trees #9 and #10 could be retained.

Boardmember Benoit commended the designer, especially on the massing of the project. She pointed out, for the benefit of the neighbor, that only the very top portion of the roof is at the maximum height – not the entire length of the roof.

Chairman Reisman asked about the concrete roofing tile saying that he believed that the roofing material would be something that the ADRB would need to review. Chairman Reisman said he supported the house, and that he would like to see it built by this applicant without changes. He further stated that he would like to see the existing trees maintained and pruned.

A motion (Jewett/Heyman) to approve the project subject to retaining trees #9, #10 and #41 and appropriately trimming and thinning the trees along the right side property line and subject to final review by the ADRB of the roofing material passed 5-0. The ADRB also asked that the applicant work with the staff and the adjoining neighbor to determine the best solution for trees #36 and #37.

OTHER ITEMS

Preliminary Review:

New Houses: 1 Mountainwood Lane
1190 Hayne Road (2nd Preliminary Review; 1st was on 3/21/05)
45 Glenbrook Drive (Teardown)
225 Roblar Avenue (Teardown)

ADJOURNMENT

Maureen K. Morton, AICP
City Planner
adrbapril_18_2005