

MINUTES APPROVED AT THE DRB MEETING ON FEBRUARY 10, 2021

DESIGN REVIEW BOARD REGULAR MEETING Richmond, CA 94804

January 27, 2021
6:00 P.M.

All Participation Via Teleconference

Due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, Contra Costa County and Governor Gavin Newsom had issued multiple orders requiring sheltering in place, social distancing, and reduction of person-to-person contact. Accordingly, Governor Newsom had issued executive orders that allowed cities to hold public meetings via teleconferencing. Due to the shelter in place orders, all City of Richmond staff, members of the Design Review Board (DRB), and members of the public participated via teleconference. Public comment was confined to items on the agenda and limited to the specific methods identified on the agenda.

BOARD MEMBERS

Kimberly Butt
Jessica Fine
Jonathan Livingston

Brian Carter
Macy Leung

Chair Livingston called the regular meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Jonathan Livingston and Boardmembers Kimberly Butt, Brian Carter, and Jessica Fine

Absent: Boardmember Macy Leung

INTRODUCTIONS

Staff Present: Planners Hector Lopez, Emily Carroll, and Jonelyn Whales, and City Attorney Shannon Moore

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: December 9, 2020

ACTION: It was M/S/C (Fine/Butt) to approve the minutes of the December 9, 2020 meeting, as submitted; approved by voice vote: 4-0 (Ayes: Butt, Carter, Fine, and Livingston; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: Leung).

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chair Livingston recommended the creation of a Consent Calendar for the agenda, to then place Item 3 on Consent.

After a brief discussion and due to the fact that the item had not been noticed as being on Consent, the Board agreed to consider Item 3 first on the agenda.

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Emily Carroll described the format of the web-based meeting and the public's ability to speak during the meeting. She also described a new feature on Zoom with respect to an English/Spanish interpretation and explained that an interpreter was on line to translate for the Spanish-speaking commenters expected for Item 5.

Public Forum

A public comment had been received from CORDELL HINDLER: *Good evening Chair Livingston, Board members and city staff, here are my comments: 1. I was very impressed with the Country Club Vista Project that was approved at the previous meeting. 2. I must remind the Board that any projects that are being considered, it will be put on hold until the public would be able to return in person. Sincerely, Cordell.*

City Council Liaison Report: None

CONSENT CALENDAR: None

APPEAL DATE:

Chair Livingston announced that any decision approved may be appealed in writing to the City Clerk within ten (10) days, or by Monday, February 8, 2021 by 5:00 P.M. and he announced it after each affected item.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

3.	PLN20-347	NEW REAR DECK
	Description	PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER A REQUEST FOR A DESIGN REVIEW PERMIT TO CONSTRUCT A DECK GREATER THAN FOUR FEET IN HEIGHT (7.5 FEET PROPOSED).
	Location	4951 SANTA RITA ROAD
	APN	431-100-068
	Zoning	RL-2, SINGLE-FAMILY LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT
	Applicant	MAXWELL BEAUMONT (OWNER)
	Staff Contact	JONELYN WHALES Recommendation: CONDITIONAL APPROVAL

Jonelyn Whales presented the staff report dated January 27, 2021, and explained that the item was straight forward and was only being considered by the DRB since the deck exceeded four feet in height. The 6,800 square foot rectangular parcel was located on Santa Rita Road in the vicinity of De Anza High School, built in the 1960s, and abutted a designated open space area. The project met all the guidelines of the RL-2 Zoning District and approval was recommended.

Boardmember Fine requested as a condition of approval that all references to El Sobrante in the documentation for the application be corrected to read *Richmond*, and suggested with respect to the proposed rear elevation that a large existing window could be converted to a sliding door or a French door to accommodate the deck.

Chair Livingston opened the public hearing.

No written comments were submitted, or oral comments made, by any member of the public.

Chair Livingston closed the public hearing.

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ACTION: It was M/S/C (Fine/Carter) to approve PLN20-347, New Rear Deck; subject to the four Findings and Statements of Fact with 6 Conditions of Approval and additional DRB conditions as follows: 7) That all references to El Sobrante in the documentation be corrected to read *Richmond*; approved by voice vote: 4-0 (Ayes: Butt, Carter, Fine, and Livingston; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: Leung).

1. **PLN20-173/175 PG&E FENCE AND BUILDING STRUCTURES**

Description	PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER A REQUEST FOR DESIGN REVIEW PERMIT FOR THE INSTALLATION OF BUILDING STRUCTURES, TOTALLING 3,850 SQUARE FEET, AND THE INSTALLATION OF A NEW 10-FOOT HIGH FENCE, INCLUDING UPGRADES TO EXISTING FENCING AND LANDSCAPING.	
Location	1100 SOUTH 27 TH STREET	
APN	560-100-007	
Zoning	RICHMOND BAY SPECIFIC PLAN DISTRICT	
Owner	PG&E	
Applicant	CHRISTIAN BRANTNER, RIM ARCHITECTS and MIKE NOVAK	
Staff Contact	EMILY CARROLL	Recommendation: CONDITIONAL APPROVAL

Emily Carroll presented the staff report dated January 27, 2021, and explained that the application for the installation of a new spoils cover and new security fencing had previously been considered by the DRB. The DRB had expressed a number of concerns about the aesthetics of the fence. PG&E had since identified specific landscaping to mitigate and soften the impact of the fencing.

CHRISTIAN BRANTNER, RIM Architects, introduced the development team and emphasized that PG&E's goal on the project was safety for the public and for PG&E staff, with a priority to reinforce the perimeter of the property by retaining and reinforcing the existing fence on the south and west sides of the property, and replacing the chain link fences on the north and east sides of the property. Landscaping had been introduced on the public side. When asked, he affirmed concurrence with the staff recommended conditions of approval.

JOHN MARTIN, RHAA Landscape Architects, identified the proposed planting improvements along the street frontage of Regatta Boulevard and South 27th Street, with a number of goals to create a welcoming streetscape appearance and experience, to connect with the nearby creek and marsh in a natural and native way, to connect with Ohlone Park to the north of the site, and to use as much of the planting as possible to minimize the presence of the fence. He identified the trees and shrubs that would be used to accomplish those goals.

Boardmember Fine supported the landscape plan and the planting palette and asked for a clarification of the structures and materials that had been proposed as part of the project, and MIKE NOVAK of NORR described the appearance and function of the spoils cover and other structures that had been proposed as part of the project.

Boardmember Carter thanked the development team for addressing the DRB's concerns and supported the proposal.

Boardmember Butt had nothing to add.

Chair Livingston also thanked the team for the changes that had been proposed to improve what had previously been a stark site.

Chair Livingston opened the public hearing. No written comments were submitted, or oral

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comments made, by any member of the public.

Chair Livingston closed the public hearing.

ACTION: It was M/S/C (Carter/Livingston) to approve PLN20-173/175, PG&E Fence and Building Structures; subject to the four Findings and Statements of Fact with 11 Conditions of Approval; approved by voice vote: 4-0 (Ayes: Butt, Carter, Fine, and Livingston; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: Leung).

2. PLN19-375	SECOND-STORY ADDITION
Description	PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER A REQUEST FOR DESIGN REVIEW TO CONSTRUCT A SECOND-STORY TO AN EXISTING STRUCTURE.
Location	223 25 TH STREET
APN	515-291-007
Zoning	CM-2, COMMERCIAL MIXED-USE DISTRICT
Applicant	NANCY CONDOR (OWNER)
Staff Contact	HECTOR LOPEZ
	Recommendation: CONDITIONAL APPROVAL

Hector Lopez presented the staff report dated January 27, 2021, and identified the proposal to construct a second story to an existing structure in a commercial zone of mixed use buildings that would include a new residential dwelling unit while the existing unit on the first floor would be removed and the office space on the ground level would be extended. The property was 4,100 square feet in size located on 25th Street between Bissell and Macdonald Avenue, had been constructed in the 1940s as a single-family residence, but had subsequently been converted into commercial offices. The project met the development standards of the district. The overall design was characterized as simple with a hipped roof and a recessed porch and was in a traditional style, harmonious in its content, and would provide a residential look more compatible with the surrounding properties along 25th Street. Approval was recommended subject to conditions.

Mr. Lopez responded to questions and explained that the office and residential uses were not connected in that there were separate entrances.

HECTOR OROZCO, the designer, advised that the property owner wanted to create more living space to maximize the use of the property.

Boardmember Carter referred to steps at the front of the property and clarified with the designer that the existing elevation in the front had a concrete slab while there was crawl space at the rear. Given the owner's desire to have crawl space throughout, the front would be raised and the building would have to be adapted to create an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) lift.

Boardmember Carter recommended that since the ground floor was a different use than the upper floor and to establish the commercial space, the cultured stone should be brought up to the belly band so that the entire bottom commercial floor was identified as different from the top residential floor. As an alternative, horizontal Hardie lap siding was recommended in lieu of the cultured stone. He also recommended that composite asphalt shingles with a more random spacing be considered instead of the traditional three tab composition shingle roof, with attention to the proportion of the windows and the belly band.

Chair Livingston referred to a sketch he had prepared and that was displayed to the Zoom meeting for comment.

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Boardmember Fine commended the applicant's drawings. With respect to the front elevation, she did not necessarily support the extension of the cultured stone all the way up, would be amenable to Hardie siding, but commented that she could leave the cultured stone as is given the precedence established for recognized commercial businesses. In terms of breaking up the mass, she suggested the belly band did that nicely. She expressed concern for added costs and would like to see the project be completed.

Boardmember Butt agreed that the proposal represented a big improvement to the building. Noting some concern for the front elevation, she supported something at a lower level or a step back. She also expressed concern for the cost to maintain shingles. Her primary concern for the front elevation was the ADA lift and she questioned whether a ramp could be incorporated into the site. She verified with the applicant that the entry doors were aluminum clad, although the applicant expressed a willingness to modify that element to be properly enhanced.

Mr. Orozco noted his understanding of the amount of glass required for windows and doors in commercial areas. He verified that the shingles would be water-proofed, the belly band would be painted white, and the cultured stone would be a mix of browns.

Chair Livingston spoke to what could be done to the front elevation to avoid the need for an ADA lift and suggested that given the new foundation there could be a way to meet ADA requirements with a ramp or the lift could be placed inside. He explained that a handicap parking place would also be required and have to be shown on the drawings. He offered a sketch to show what the applicant would need to accommodate that requirement.

NANCY CONDOR, the property owner, expressed concern that the proposed changes to the front elevation would destroy the aesthetic design of her property. She added there would be insufficient space to provide a ramp to the front door, and she needed the office space on the second floor to accommodate her family.

Boardmember Carter offered another sketch with a single gable and with the second story pushed back a bit by matching the plane of the entrance with the plane of the second story, around four feet, which he suggested would not impact the useable space of the second floor and which would help to differentiate the use of the ground floor from that of the top floor. He also suggested that the ADA lift could be placed underneath the overhang.

Chair Livingston opened the public hearing.

No written comments were submitted, or oral comments made, by any member of the public.

Chair Livingston closed the public hearing.

The DRB discussed the issues with respect to the front elevation along with the secondary roof and the ADA lift and recommended a revised design to address the front elevation and the entry, setting the lift in under the porch. The DRB was otherwise pleased with the side elevations and the approach. The designer was directed to address the front elevation and entry, the ADA lift, and integrate the required handicap parking space into the site plan.

Chair Livingston suggested that the paved over planting strip in the front could be removed to accommodate an ADA access aisle in the front, with a path of travel to be shown from the access aisle to the ADA lift. He added that any signage would also have to be identified.

Boardmember Carter requested that the details of the cultured stone and the roof material with

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the proposed color also be included on the plans.

AARON WOLMAN, speaking for the applicant, verified the issues that the applicant was directed to address and noted for the record that the applicant supported an ADA lift as opposed to a ramp.

ACTION: It was M/S/C (Livingston/Carter) to continue PLN19-375, Second-Story Addition, to the meeting of February 10, 2021: 4-0 (Ayes: Butt, Carter, Fine, and Livingston; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: Leung).

- 4. PLN20-061 ST. JOHN MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH**
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| Description | CONSIDER A RECOMMENDATION TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION FOR A DESIGN REVIEW PERMIT AND CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT TO CONSTRUCT A ±10,000 SQUARE FOOT RECREATIONAL FACILITY AND ASSOCIATED PARKING LOT IMPROVEMENTS TO SERVE AN EXISTING BAPTIST CHURCH. | |
| Location | 29 8 TH STREET | |
| APN | 538-410-027 | |
| Zoning | RM-2, MEDIUM-HIGH MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT | |
| Owner | ST. JOHN MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH | |
| Applicant | ABDUL ESMAIL | |
| Staff Contact: | HECTOR LOPEZ | Recommendation: RECOMMENDATION TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION |

Chair Livingston advised that the application would be continued to the meeting of February 10, 2021.

- 5. PLN21-007 BOORMAN PARK IMPROVEMENTS**
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| Description | STUDY SESSION TO PROVIDE FEEDBACK ON THE PRELIMINARY DESIGN OF THE BOORMAN PARK IMPROVEMENTS INCLUDING A MULTI-USE TRAIL, WITH FITNESS STATIONS, A SMALL SKATE PARK, AN ATHLETIC FIELD, A BASKETBALL COURT, A FITNESS ZONE, CHILDREN PLAY AREAS, AND A COMMUNITY GATHERING AREA. THE IMPROVEMENTS ALSO INCLUDE A PUBLIC RESTROOM BUILDING, TWO PARKING LOTS (22 SPACES), PARK BEAUTIFICATION (ARTWORK), A SHADE STRUCTURE, LANDSCAPING, WAYFINDING SIGNAGE, AND SAFETY FEATURES. | |
| Location | SOUTH 25 TH STREET, NORTH OF MAINE AVENUE | |
| APN | 549-020-036 | |
| Zoning | PR, PARKS AND RECREATION DISTRICT | |
| Applicant | CITY OF RICHMOND PARKS DIVISION/CONSULTANT MARCIA VALLIER OF VDA, INC. (OWNER) | |
| Staff Contact: | EMILY CARROLL | Recommendation: PROVIDE AND RECEIVE COMMENTS |

Emily Carroll presented the staff report dated January 27, 2021, and described the study session to look at park improvements which she noted had been driven by members of the community. The preliminary plan was being presented to seek input from the DRB. She reiterated that there was a Spanish translator to assist those wishing to comment.

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MARCIA VALLIER, Vallier Designs, presented the park project and explained that the West County Regional Group of First Five Contra Costa would help describe the project and its importance to the community.

Ms. Vallier reported that Boorman Park was a 3.3 acre neighborhood park in the Cortez/Stege neighborhood and the revitalization of the park had involved a collaborative effort with Richmond residents, early childhood advocates, and the City of Richmond to improve the health and wellness, safety, beauty of the park, and offer access to outdoor recreation for all ages and abilities. She added that every item had been discussed since 2018 when 25 parks in Richmond had been evaluated. Ultimately, Boorman Park had been identified as needing the most work and a Master Plan had been created to apply for a Prop 68 grant. That effort had been successful and a grant of \$4.125 million had been received for the park renovation.

Ms. Vallier presented a diagram of the program elements and the overall schematic design and reported that the community had been very involved in every element from the multi-use trail around the entire site, a skate spot, basketball court, soccer field, spectator seating, fitness area, children's play, a gathering area, restrooms including a family restroom, outdoor hand washing station, drinking fountain, green infrastructure, wayfinding, parking, bike racks, and creative place making. In addition, the participants would work with the Richmond Arts & Culture Commission and the Public Arts Advisory Committee to pursue Art in the Park. She described the industrial, rail line and residential uses surrounding the site, and provided details of the amenities that had been proposed throughout the site for all ages. Site furnishings would be similar to those installed in other parks, and treasure box trash cans could also be considered, to be determined by the community.

Given that the site was an old tile manufacturing facility, Ms. Vallier explained there would be clean-up on the site, which clean-up would be identified at a later date.

TOMASA ESPINOZA offered her comments in Spanish, which were then translated to advise that she was a Richmond resident and the Vice Chair of the West County Regional Group sponsored by First Five Contra Costa. She thanked Vallier Designs for their hard work in creating the design that reflected the community's vision. The West County Regional Group was a group of parent volunteers who fought for healthier, safer and ethical communities. In collaboration with the City of Richmond and First Five, she described the assessment of 25 parks in low-income areas of Richmond, the multiple community workshops that had been held to analyze data and identify Boorman Park as the number one priority, and the process to seek Prop 68 funding. After the project had been funded, another community workshop had evaluated the final design for the project to meet the community's needs when every detail of the design had been considered. She urged approval to make the park a reality.

MARIA TERESA FRANCO, Chair of the West County Regional Group sponsored by First Five Contra Costa, reiterated the process that had been described and thanked Ms. Vallier for her support throughout the process. She described the multiple outreach efforts of the parents to involve as many residents of the community as possible to produce the design that was 100 percent the community's vision, and stated that each element of the proposal had been thoroughly analyzed by the community, including by the children of the community.

Ms. Vallier commented that she had been amazed by the collaboration with the residents of the community and she would be pleased to return with the final design.

Boardmember Butt supported the proposal, commended the funding, and was excited to see what had been proposed. Given the historic Pullman Child Care Center located across the street from

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the subject site that was part of WWII and the National Park Service elements, she asked if there had been discussions about potential connections with the artwork or potentially another source of funding for the park project through that connection.

Boardmember Fine noted that the community outreach process was inspiring and she suggested that model could be repeated elsewhere. She supported the proposal and stated the bike parking should be identified on site, as should the lighting and landscape and planting plan. Since water fountains were not necessarily supported given some health concerns, she requested that water bottle fillers be considered instead. She also asked about an underlying theme to the whole park, potentially in line with the adjacent historical site.

Board member Carter liked the teaching gardens and outdoor classroom in the community gathering area, and understood that artificial turf would look and perform better from a sports standpoint but asked about stormwater impacts from a landscape standpoint.

Ms. Vallier stated the artificial turf could be a water storage gallery and would represent less maintenance for the City. Currently the budget identified regular grass but the rest of the site would be low maintenance. She reiterated the desire to search for additional money and to potentially use artificial turf, if possible.

Chair Livingston supported the impressive improvements and the benefits to the community. He suggested the restroom proposed to be adjacent to the residential units needed a buffer and recommended that the restrooms be moved elsewhere in the park. He liked the techno look of the structure with the steel but from a holistic standpoint suggested that a solid wood frame with solid timbers and natural materials was preferred since it was warmer and more sustainable. He supported something other than all steel.

Ms. Vallier noted that while wood panels had been considered, there was a concern for fire. She suggested that the base could be wood clad with log seating, potentially with the use of reclaimed wood from the neighborhood. She agreed to consider integrating the historic elements and art into the structure.

The following comment had been received with respect to Item 5 from CORDELL HINDLER: *Good evening Chair Livingston, Board members and city staff, I have some comments for the record: I have reviewed the schematic design, and I like the concept, the only concern that I have is maintaining the area. Sincerely, Cordell.*

Board Business

A. Staff reports, requests, or announcements: None

Nomination for Chair and Vice-Chair

After discussion, Jonathan Livingston was nominated as Chair and Brian Carter was nominated as Vice Chair of the Design Review Board for 2021, with that nomination to be returned on the next meeting agenda for a vote.

B. Boardmember reports, requests, or announcements:

Chair Livingston offered updates to some previously approved projects.

Adjournment

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The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 P.M. to the next regular Design Review Board meeting on Wednesday, February 10, 2021.