

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF LOS ALTOS, HELD ON WEDNESDAY, MARCH 5, 2014,
BEGINNING AT 7:00 P.M. AT LOS ALTOS CITY HALL, ONE NORTH SAN
ANTONIO ROAD, LOS ALTOS, CALIFORNIA**

ESTABLISH QUORUM

PRESENT: Chair WHEELER, Commissioners BLOCKHUS and KIRIK
ABSENT: Commissioner MEADOWS and MOISON
STAFF: Planning Services Manager KORNFIELD and Assistant Planners DAVIS and GALLEGOS

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

None.

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION/ACTION

CONSENT CALENDAR

1. Design Review Commission Minutes

Approve minutes of the regular meeting of February 5, 2014.

MOTION by Commissioner KIRIK, seconded by Commissioner BLOCKHUS, to approve the minutes of the February 5, 2014 regular meeting per the amended condition to agenda item 5 for the project located 860 S. El Monte Avenue as follows:

- A limited boundary survey to the property lines near the addition shall be required, prior to issuance of a Building Permit.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

PUBLIC HEARING

2. 14-V-01 – D. Tamira – 1135 Laureles Drive

Variance to maintain a non-conforming rear yard setback of 14 feet, seven inches, where a minimum setback of 25 feet is required. The variance would allow a single-story addition of 624 square feet. *Project Planner: Gallegos*

Assistant Planner GALLEGOS presented the staff report, recommending approval of variance application 14-V-01 subject to the listed findings.

The property owner, Aaron Lewison, explained the history of the property, the intent to bring up prior development to current standards and expand to meet growth needs by continuing the nonconforming wall from the 1978 variance that was granted. Neighbor Michael Tenta, spoke in opposition to the project summarizing his letter and intent to keep his adjacent rear yard as a rear yard, that the proposed addition blocks his view, and disagreed with the alleged lot constraints. There was no other public comment.

The Commission discussed the project and both Commissioner KIRIK and Chair WHEELER felt that there were other options for the design to conform to code such as going into the front and

rear yards to expand or turning the garage to make the house address the street better. Commissioner BLOCKHUS noted that the lot is unusual and the proposed addition is low-impact and makes sense with the shape of the lot. Commissioner BLOCKHUS and Chair WHEELER then discussed opposing points.

MOTION by Commissioner KIRIK, seconded by Chair WHEELER, to deny variance application 14-V-01.

THE MOTION PASSED BY A 2/1 VOTE, WITH BLOCKHUS OPPOSED.

DISCUSSION

3. **13-SC-25 – H. Balazadeh – 766 Raymundo Avenue**

Design Review for a new, two-story house. The project includes 2,819 square feet on the first story and 1,646 square feet on the second story. *Project Planner: Davis*

Assistant Planner DAVIS presented the staff report recommending approval of design review application 13-SC-25 and the revised plans subject to the listed recommended direction.

Property owner, Nick Stavrakos, thanked staff for their efforts. Project designer, Hamed Balazadeh, talked about the CC&R's and said that it states a front yard setback of 40 feet to the street, not the property line, and they are beyond that at 46 feet to the street. He summarized the changes to the plans, which included lowering the plate heights and increasing the setbacks and stated that a gable roof was the simpler option to minimize the roof over the garage.

Neighbor Nancy Ellickson spoke in opposition to the project stating that a 40-foot front yard setback should be provided, the project does not conform to character issues of size, setback, and scale, and three-quarters ($\frac{3}{4}$) of the neighborhood opposes the project. Larry Nevin stated that the house is too large and had concerns about privacy issues. There was no other public comment.

The Commission discussed the project and expressed their design concerns. Commissioner BLOCKHUS stated that the City could not regulate private CC&R's, that two-stories are allowed, the revised plans seem to address concerns in balance with the neighborhood concerns, and he supports the revised plans. Commissioner KIRIK noted that Raymundo has a consistent character neighborhood and Arroyo is transitional, hip roofs should be considered to minimize the height of the walls/roof and create a uniform eave line, and he found it hard to support the project as designed and wanted to consider more mitigation such as increasing the front yard setback to 40 feet. He also noted that a compatible design would have more of a single-story emphasis and a limited second story toward the rear of the property. Chair WHEELER stated that while the project has made efforts to address concerns, it does not fit the context of the neighborhood, the mass and bulk of the design is not compatible, and there is strong neighborhood discontent.

MOTION by Chair WHEELER, seconded by Commissioner KIRIK, to deny design review application 13-SC-25.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

4. **13-SC-34 – C. Anderson – 610 Twelve Acres Drive**

Design Review for a first and second story addition and facade remodel. The additions include 80 square feet at the first story and 70 square feet to the second story. *Project Planner: Davis*

Assistant Planner DAVIS presented the staff report recommending approval of design review application 13-SC-34 subject to the listed findings and conditions.

Project applicant/architect, Chris Anderson, made himself available for questions. There was no other public comment.

The Commission discussed the project and expressed their general support. Commissioner KIRIK noted that it was a challenging lot and well designed. Chair WHEELER stated that the project had a good design to minimize privacy impacts.

MOTION by Commissioner KIRIK, seconded by Commissioner BLOCKHUS, to approve design review application 13-SC-34 per the staff report findings and conditions.
THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

5. 13-SC-33 – Summers and Novick – 1650 Morton Avenue

Design review for a new, two-story house. The project includes 2,289 square feet on the first floor and 1,261 square feet on the second floor. *Project Planner: Gallegos*

Assistant Planner GALLEGOS presented the staff report, recommending approval of a design review application 13-SC-33 subject to the listed findings and conditions. Chair WHEELER noted that he lives on the same street, 2,000 feet away, but has no conflict.

The project architect, Leon Summers, made himself available to answer questions and stated that he had contacted everyone but behind the project site on Alford Avenue. Neighbor Peter Varvak spoke in support of the project and in favor of removing the redwood tree next to his property. Neighbor Diane Winant stated that the applicant was very considerate, but wishes the house were smaller, 5,000 square feet including the basement. There was no other public comment.

The Commission discussed the project, expressed their general support for the design. Commissioner BLOCKHUS noted that the west fence was in disrepair. Commissioner KIRIK stated that the project had a good design, that the neighbor is in support, and the project takes advantage of mature landscape and has intermediate roof lines to mitigate bulk. Chair WHEELER commented that the house seems to fit in and appreciated the applicant working with the neighbors.

MOTION by Commissioner BLOCKHUS, seconded by Commissioner KIRIK, to approve design review application 13-SC-33 per the staff report findings and conditions, with the following additional condition:

- Replace the six-foot fence along the west property line.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

6. Joint Meeting with City Council

Discussion of a potential, upcoming joint meeting with the City Council.

Chair WHEELER stated that there was no need to have a joint meeting with the City Council and the Commission agreed.

COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS AND COMMENTS

None.

POTENTIAL FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Commissioner KIRIK suggested discussing the City's balcony policy and guidelines for a future agenda item and Commissioner BLOCKHUS said that the Commission should not be relying on privacy screening to mitigate concerns. The Commission agreed.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair WHEELER adjourned the meeting at 9:12 PM.

David Kornfield, AICP
Planning Services Manager