

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION  
OF THE CITY OF LOS ALTOS, HELD ON WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2014,  
BEGINNING AT 7:00 P.M. AT LOS ALTOS CITY HALL, ONE NORTH SAN  
ANTONIO ROAD, LOS ALTOS, CALIFORNIA**

**ESTABLISH QUORUM**

PRESENT: Chair BLOCKHUS, Vice-Chair KIRIK, Commissioners MEADOWS and  
WHEELER

ABSENT: Commissioner MOISON

STAFF: Planning Services Manager KORNFIELD, Senior Planner DAHL, and Assistant  
Planner LIM

**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 November 19, 2014.

MOTION by Commissioner MEADOWS, seconded by Vice-Chair KIRIK, to approve the minutes of the November 19, 2014 regular meeting.

THE MOTION PASSED BY A 3/0/1 VOTE, WITH COMMISSIONER WHEELER  
ABSTAINED.

**DISCUSSION**

2. **14-SC-18 – T. Landa – 1524 Fremont Avenue**  
Design review for a two-story house. The project includes 2,425 square feet on the first story and 1,385 b square feet on the second story. *Project Planner: Dahl*

Senior Planner DAHL presented the staff report recommending approval of design review application 14-SC-18 subject to the findings and conditions. He noted the condition for privacy mitigation.

Project designer David Britt made himself available to answer questions. There was no other public comment.

The commissioners discussed the project and expressed their general support for the design. The Commission discussed if the project needed more landscape on the left side for privacy, if there was a concern about the proximity of the pool to the balcony for safety reasons and that the front yard setback could be reduced to address the issue.

MOTION by Commissioner MEADOWS, seconded by Vice-Chair KIRIK, to approve design review application 14-SC-18 per the staff report findings and conditions.  
THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (4/0).

**3. 14-SC-29 – S. Benzing Architect – 1251 S. Springer Road**

Design review for a two-story house. The project includes the addition of 432 square feet on the first story and 1,157 square feet on the second story. *Project Planner: Lim*

Assistant Planner LIM presented the staff report recommending continuance of design review application 14-SC-29 subject to the recommended direction.

Project architect Steve Benzing stated that he designed the two-story house to save the yard. He said that a Tuscan design was desired and that it fit in with low wall plates, increased setbacks, and good articulation within the neighborhood and that he met with the neighbors, who gave their support. There was no other public comment.

The commissioners discussed the project and stated general concerns with regard to mass and bulk, that the elevations needed improvement to minimize bulk, that the windows need to be simplified and cohesive, that the side elevations could have some windows to improve the quality, and the the front elevation is the most problematic being too massive and complex in its design.

MOTION by Commissioner MEADOWS, seconded by Vice-Chair KIRIK, to continue design review application 14-SC-29 per the staff report recommended direction.  
THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (4/0).

**4. 14-SC-38 – T. Gotham and K. Porterfield – 1675 Juarez Avenue**

Design review for a two-story house. The project includes 2,959 square feet on the first story and 809 square feet on the second story. *Project Planner: Lim*

Assistant Planner LIM presented the staff report recommending approval of design review application 14-SC-38 subject to the findings and conditions.

Property owner/applicant Todd Gotham made himself available for questions. There was no other public comment.

The commissioners discussed the project and considered if it looked top heavy and if it was appropriate to lower the second story wall plate or use other means to address the concern, that condition No. 4 is not necessary, and that overall it is a good design that should fit-in.

MOTION by Commissioner MEADOWS, seconded by Chair BLOCKHUS, to approve design review application 14-SC-38 per the staff report findings and conditions, with the following change:  
Remove condition No. 4.

THE MOTION FAILED BY A 2/2 VOTE, WITH VICE-CHAIR KIRIK AND COMMISSIONER WHEELER OPPOSED.

MOTION by Vice-Chair KIRIK, seconded by Commissioner WHEELER, to continue design review application 14-SC-38 to reduce the second story wall plate height to eight feet and remove condition No. 4.

THE MOTION FAILED BY A 2/2 VOTE, WITH CHAIR BLOCKHUS AND COMMISSIONER MEADOWS OPPOSED.

MOTION by Vice-Chair KIRIK, seconded by Commissioner WHEELER, to approve design review application 14-SC-38 per the staff report findings and conditions with the following change and additional condition:

Remove condition No. 4; and

Lower the second story wall plate height to eight feet.

THE MOTION FAILED BY A 2/2 VOTE, WITH CHAIR BLOCKHUS AND COMMISSIONER MEADOWS OPPOSED.

Property owner Todd Gotham stated that he wanted the walls to have the same plate so that he could use the same size windows on both levels.

MOTION by Commissioner MEADOWS, seconded by Vice-Chair KIRIK, to continue design review application 14-SC-38 to:

Reduce the perceived appearance and mass of the second story.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (4/0).

**5. 14-SC-40 – Blu Homes – 444 Mundell Way**

Design review for a one-story house with an accessory structure (studio) over 12 feet in height. The project includes 2,294 square feet in the main structure, 588 square feet in the detached garage, and 450 square feet in the detached studio that is 17 feet in height. *Project Planner: Lim*

Assistant Planner LIM presented the staff report recommending approval of design review application 14-SC-40 subject to the findings and conditions.

Project architect Laura Shen explained the modular design technology and the architecture. Neighbor Karen Merchant of Traverso Avenue raised a concern about the reflective roof material. There was no other public comment.

The commissioners discussed the project and expressed their general support for the design, that it fit in with the eclectic neighborhood character, that the landscaping design was appropriate, that they support of extra height for the accessory structure for architectural compatibility, and that the applicant should consider rotating the accessory structure to face north.

MOTION by Commissioner WHEELER, seconded by Commissioner MEADOWS, to approve design review application 14-SC-36 per the staff report findings and conditions.  
THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (4/0).

**COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS AND COMMENTS**

Chair BLOCKHUS commented that all references to the Architectural and Site Control Committee (A&S) in the Residential Design Guidelines should be changed to reflect the Design Review Commission (DRC), since the Architectural and Site Review Committee was dissolved by the City Council, and that the Guidelines could be amended to focus on key issues at the beginning of the document. Staff agreed to administratively amend the Guidelines to refer to the Design Review Commission and prepare for a future agenda item to consider revisions to them.

## **POTENTIAL FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

None.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Chair BLOCKHUS adjourned the meeting at 8:42 PM.

---

David Kornfield  
Planning Services Manager