

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION OF
THE CITY OF LOS ALTOS, HELD ON WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2020 BEGINNING
AT 7:01 P.M. AT LOS ALTOS CITY HALL, ONE NORTH SAN ANTONIO ROAD, LOS
ALTOS, CALIFORNIA**

Please Note: Per California Executive Order N-29-20, the Commissions will meet via teleconference only. Members of the Public may call (650) 242-4929 to participate in the conference call (Meeting ID: 148 853 3086) or via the web at <https://meetings.ringcentral.com/j/1488533086>. Members of the Public may only comment during times allotted for public comments. Public testimony will be taken at the direction of the Commission Chair and members of the public may only comment during times allotted for public comments. Members of the public are also encouraged to submit written testimony prior to the meeting at DesignReviewCommission@losaltosca.gov or Planning@losaltosca.gov. Emails received prior to the meeting will be included in the public record.

ESTABLISH QUORUM

PRESENT: Chair Ma, Vice-Chair Bishop, Commissioners Blockhus, Kirik, and Harding
STAFF: Planning Services Manager Persicone and Assistant Planner Hassan

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 18, 2020.

Action: Upon a motion by Commissioner Harding, seconded by Commissioner Kirik, the Commission approved the minutes from the November 18, 2020 regular meeting as written.

The motion was approved (5-0) by the following vote:

AYES: Bishop, Blockhus Harding, Kirik, and Ma

NOES: None

PUBLIC HEARING

2. **V20-0002 – Scott Thrift – 1129 Las Flores Court**
Variance request for 125sq ft of a one-story addition to extend into the front yard setback area by approximately 3.6ft at the most constrained point. *Project Planner: Hassan*

Assistant Planner Hassan presented the staff report recommending approval of variance application V20-0002 subject to the listed findings and conditions.

Scott Thrift, project architect, presented the reason for the variance including the topography of the lot and the need to reduce landscaping in the rear of the lot for an addition.

Manoj Vittal, property owner, spoke about the need for a larger house because of his family.

Public Comment

None.

Commission discussion then proceeded.

Action: Upon a motion by Commissioner Kirik, seconded by Commissioner Harding, the Commission approved variance application V20-0002 per the staff report findings and conditions, with the following additional condition:

- The garage shall have a hipped roof.

The motion was approved (5-0) by the following vote:

AYES: Bishop, Blockhus, Harding, Kirik and Ma

NOES: None

DISCUSSION

3. 18-SC-30 – EID Architects – 370 Yerba Santa Avenue

Design review for a new two-story house with a basement. The project will include a new house with 2,657 square feet at the first story and 1,391 square feet at the second story. *Project Planner: Gallegos*

Associate Planner Gallegos presented the staff report recommending approval of design review application 18-SC-30 subject to the listed findings and conditions and answered Commissioner questions.

Property owner, Wei Zhong, stated that they have been looking for a place to stay for the last few years, this property came to their attention, he loves the mature tree lines, the private country look of the street, and has a young growing family to care for.

Project architect, Mark Wommack, gave a very extensive presentation explaining the thought process behind the revised design of the project, the community outreach that was conducted, and answered Commissioner questions.

Public Comment

The following persons spoke in opposition to the project: Bruce Beck, Bob Simmons, Ned Hooper, Frey Hooper, Richard Barth, Lorrie Barth, Pat Sheehan, Tom Popek. The public comment raised were the bulk, scale, design, landscaping, and privacy impacts from the new house.

Bob Simmons did not have anything to say, except to pass his time to next speaker.

Bruce Beck stated he has lived here for 40 years and 20 of them have been on Yerba Santa; staff's analysis is missing from the street-level; and has only the birds-eye view.

Ned Hooper (421 Yerba Buena) stated he was concerned that the windows overlook his backyard; the house is overscaled; the issue of privacy and bulk needs to be addressed; it is a unique lot that borders four yards; and is clearly a unique lane.

Frey Hooper (421 Yerba Buena) stated that the street is a lovely country lane; is a consistent character neighborhood with one-story houses; it will be the first two-story and is setting the bar; the house is 6,800 square feet and is a starting point for future homes.

Richard Barth (418 Yerba Santa Avenue) stated that the discussion has been emotionally charged for the neighbors; this is a unique lot, and it borders four yards; and the impact of proposed design cannot be diminished by landscaping.

Lorrie Barth (418 Yerba Santa Avenue) stated her concerns with the design; opposes the bulk and height because it will impact them; said they use the outdoor area for family and themselves. It has been a tranquil setting.

Pat Sheehan (360 Yerba Santa Avenue) said she was pleased the architects and owners altered the original design and style to be a more country style; as far as she is concerned, the landscaping and screening would be important to address; with the right landscaping, it could cause less of an issue; has no problems with sizes of the windows; is more concerned with looking at the structure; and she organized the resurfacing the street.

Tom Popek (400 Raquel Lane) stated the application submitted to the City includes houses on Raquel Lane, which is misleading; the neighborhood should only be tied to Yerba Santa Avenue, not other streets; when sitting on the back deck, he will see a 27-foot high and wide wall; the landscaping is not withstanding; the second story windows will have views into their house; and objects to the house, which is out of place and not consistent with the neighborhood on Yerba Santa Avenue.

Action: Upon a motion by Commissioner Kirik, seconded by Commissioner Blockhus, the Commission continued design review application 18-SC-20 with the following direction to the applicant and requested said modifications be brought back to a future undetermined DRC meeting:

- Reduce the size of the light well;
- Move bedroom No. 3 window to the front;
- Add a skylight to sheet A3.4;
- Directed staff to prepare a condition of approval stating “*the applicant will be required to enter into a bond with the City of Los Altos. Said bond will be kept to ensure no damage is done to the private road leading into 370 Yerba Santa. Said bond will not be released until the applicant can demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the Public Works Director or his/her designee that the road leading to 370 Yerba Santa has been adequately maintained and is free of any damage caused from the development project*”
- Directed the applicant to prepare a robust construction management plan for review by City staff and the DRC to reduce the impacts to the neighborhood from this project.
- Along the second story of the westerly elevation (right side), the gables shall be revised to a hipped roof over bedroom No. 2.

The motion was approved (4-1) by the following vote:

AYES: Bishop, Blockhus, Kirik and Ma

NOES: Harding

The DRC discussed the revised solar panel memo prepared by the City Attorney.

COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS AND COMMENTS

None.

POTENTIAL FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Ma adjourned the meeting at 9:52 PM.