
14.25.070 Design review board.

A. Purpose and Authority.

1. The design review board shall serve as an advisory body to the city for the purpose of reviewing and formulating recommendations on all major physical improvements requiring environmental and design review permits, except that an alternate streamlined review process is allowed for certain eligible projects as described below. The design review board may also serve as an advisory body on other design matters, including minor physical improvements or administrative design permits, referred to the board by the community development director, planning commission or city council. The design review board shall provide professional design analysis, evaluation and judgment as to the completeness, competence and appropriateness of development proposals for the use and setting and to recommend approval, approval with conditions, redesign or denial based on design standards adopted by the city council.
2. Streamlined Review of Certain Residential Projects. The following residential projects shall be eligible for a streamlined review process, as established by city council resolution under a pilot program known as the "streamlined review for certain residential projects."
 - a. Residential structures of three (3) to ten (10) units.
 - b. Additions to multifamily residential structures of between three (3) to ten (10) units, where the addition constitutes no more than forty (40) percent of the total square footage of the building and would not increase the unit count by more than three (3) units.

This streamlined review process allows for a joint meeting of the planning commission and two (2) representatives of the design review board. The framework, roles and membership of the design review board representatives for a streamlined review process shall be as established by city council resolution.

B. Membership of the Design Review Board. The design review board shall consist of a total of five (5) regular members and may include one alternate member appointed by the city council. The design review board members shall be qualified as follows:

1. At least two (2) members shall be licensed architects or licensed building designers;
2. At least one member shall be a licensed landscape architect;
3. At least one of the five (5) members shall have background or experience in urban design;
4. The alternate member may have qualifications in any of the above fields of expertise;
5. All board members shall reside in the city of San Rafael; and
6. In addition to the five (5) council-appointed board members and one alternate member, one planning commissioner shall attend board meetings. This liaison planning commissioner shall be appointed by the commission chairperson. An additional commissioner shall be appointed to serve as an "alternate liaison" in case of absence. The planning commission liaison should be present at all design review board meetings to offer advice and direction to the board on matters of commission concern.

C. Alternate Member. The alternate member may temporarily fill a vacancy created when a regular member: (1) leaves office prior to completion of the member's term; (2) cannot attend a meeting; or (3) cannot participate on a particular matter due to a conflict of interest.

D. Term of Office. The term of office for each design review board member shall be four (4) years. Of the members of the board first appointed, one shall be appointed for the term of one year; one for the term of two (2) years; one for the term of three (3) years; and two (2) for the term of four (4) years. The term of office for the alternate board member shall be four (4) years concurrent with the term of the chairperson.

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- E. Removal or Vacancy of Membership. Any member of the board or the alternate member can be removed at any time by a majority vote by the city council. A vacancy shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment. The person appointed to fill a vacancy shall serve for the remainder of the unexpired term.
 - F. Meetings. At least one (1) regular design review board meeting shall be held each month on a date selected by the board, unless there is no business to conduct. The design review board may adopt and amend as necessary, Rules of Order ensuring efficient and responsive board meetings.
 - G. Quorum. Three (3) of the members of the board, either regular members or two (2) regular members and the alternate board member, shall be required to constitute a quorum for the transaction of the business of the board and the affirmation vote of a majority of those present is required to take any action.
 - H. Compensation of the Design Review Board. All members of the board shall serve as such without compensation.
 - I. The design review board may adopt, and amend as necessary, Rules of Order to ensure efficient and responsive board meetings.

(Ord. 1838 § 53, 2005: Ord. 1794 § 2, 2003: Ord. 1625 § 1 (part), 1992).

(Ord. No. 1882, Exh. A, § 94, 6-21-2010; Ord. No. 2006 , § 1, 5-2-2022)