

MINUTES



San Rafael Design Review Board Regular Meeting Wednesday, February 17, 2021, 7:00 P.M.

Virtual Meeting

Watch on Webinar: <https://tinyurl.com/Drb-2021-02-17>

Telephone: (669) 900-9128

Meeting ID: 897-5942-0487#

Present: Chair Pro Tem Paul
Chair Kent
Member Rege
Member Summers

Absent: Member Blayney

Also Present: Steve Stafford, Senior Planner
Ali Giudice, Planning Manager
Michele Ginn, Permit Services Coordinator
Paul Jensen, Community Development Director
Barry Miller, General Plan Project Planner

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. All Board members were present, except for Member Blayney. The Board is currently operating without a replacement for former Member Samina Saude, who is now a Planning Commissioner.

STAFF COMMUNICATION

Staff received the following public comments after the distribution of Staff Reports, which were forwarded to the Board as separate emails-

Responsible Growth Marin provided the following comments on Agenda Item #2:

- Language on what qualifies for DRAC review needs further refinement
- Language on the membership of the DRAC needs further refinement

Victoria DeWitt (West End neighborhood resident) provided the following comments on Agenda Items #1 and #2:

- Requests amendment of 11/04/20 DRB meeting minutes to reflect her previously submitted comments on the proposed DRAC
- Authority for the DRAC needs further refinement
- Membership on DRAC needs further refinement

Sustainable San Rafael provided the following comments on Agenda Item #3:

- Provided specific miscellaneous recommendations for improving the DPP

BOARD COMMUNICATION

None

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION OF MEETING PROCEDURES

Chair Pro Tem Paul invited Senior Planner Steve Stafford who informed the community that members of the public would provide public comment either on the telephone or through Zoom. He explained the process for community participation on the telephone and Zoom.

Chair Pro Tem Paul reviewed the procedures for the meeting.

CONSENT CALENDAR

1. Approval of the Design Review Board Meeting Minutes of November 4, 2020

Recommended Action – Approve as submitted

Staff withdraws November 4, 2020 meeting minutes to allow staff to improve the record.

DISCUSSION ITEM

2. Report on Possible Changes to Design Review Board Structure and Processes

Review and solicit feedback on proposed pilot program creating a Design Review Advisory Committee (DRAC)

Project Planners: Paul Jensen and Ali Giudice

Recommended Action – Accept report and provide feedback to staff

Alicia Giudice, Planning Manager presented the Staff Report.

Staff responded to questions from the Board members.

Correspondence in real-time on telephone or Zoom:

Jay Hubert, President of Dominican Neighborhood Association, Victoria DeWitt, Shirley Fischer, Terra Linda Homeowners Association, Kate Powers, Grace Geraghty, Claire Halenbeck

Staff responded to public comment.

Staff responded to further questions from the Board members.

No vote taken, only feedback requested. Board provided the following comments:

- The membership of the DRAC should be increased from two DRB members to three DRB members
- The public should be included in the DRAC process
- A flowchart clearly showing those projects, which would go to the DRAC and which would go to the full DRB would be helpful

PUBLIC HEARING

3. Draft Downtown San Rafael Precise Plan

The Design Review Board (DRB) will hold a public hearing on the Draft Downtown Precise Plan, including the Draft Form Based Code (FBC). The purpose of the hearing is to update the DRB on the proposed Plan and FBC and provide an opportunity for comments from DRB members and the public.

Case Nos.: GPA16-001 & P16-013

Project Planner: Barry Miller

Recommended Action – Accept report

Ali Giudice, Planning Manager introduced Stefan Pellegrini, Opticos Design who presented the Staff Report.

Staff responded to questions from the Board members.

Correspondence in real-time on telephone or Zoom:

Kate Powers, Binky, Brad Sears, Claire Halenbeck

Staff responded to further questions from the Board members.

No vote taken, only feedback requested. Board provided the following comments:

The form-based code approach to site development makes sense in the Downtown. More attention should be given to areas susceptible to projected sea level rise. Concern expressed with proposed increased building heights at the ‘bookends’ to West End Village neighborhood of Downtown, at the westernmost borders (convergence of Fourth and Second Streets) and the easternmost borders (Fourth and E Streets). The Board believes the West End Village neighborhood is a transition area, which should have lower building heights. Concern expressed with proposed increased building heights adjacent to U.S. Highway 101 and the potential result of a wall of building and loss of views of Downtown and surrounding hills. Concern that taller buildings will result in reduced solar access along Downtown streets and request solar studies to ensure the pedestrian experience is not impacted.

OTHER AGENDA ITEM

4. Annual Meeting of Design Review Board

Preparation in advance of Annual Meeting of Design Review Board to include: a) Distribution of Design Review Board “Rules of Order” for review before annual meeting; and b) Election of Officers for 2021 Design Review Board meetings.

Project Planner: Steve Stafford

Recommended Action – Accept report

Steve Stafford presented the Staff Report.

Member Summers moved and Member Kent seconded to adopt the existing Rules of Order as presented in the Staff Report.

AYES: Members: Kent, Rege, Summers & Chair Pro Tem Paul

NOES: Members: None

ABSENT: Members: Blayney

ABSTAIN: Members: None

Motion carried 4-0-1

Adopted the existing Rules of Order as presented in the Staff Report

Member Summers moved and Member Kent seconded to elect Vice Chair Paul to Chair and Member Rege to Vice Chair

AYES: Members: Kent, Rege, Summers & Chair Pro Tem Paul

NOES: Members: None

ABSENT: Members: Blayney

ABSTAIN: Members: None

Motion carried 4-0-1

Elected Vice Chair Paul to Chair and Member Rege to Vice Chair

ADJOURNMENT:

Chair Pro Tem Paul adjourned the meeting at 9:49 p.m.

LINDSAY LARA, City Clerk

APPROVED THIS ____ DAY OF _____, 2021

Jeff Kent, Chair