



REPORT TO DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

SUBJECT: 380 Margarita Drive – ED21-011 (PLAN21-019) for construction of a new single-family home with a detached garage; APN: 015-320-03; Planned Development District (PD) 1808-H; Will Kelty, Owner and Applicant.

SUMMARY

This project is being referred to the Design Review Board to advise on the design of the single-family residence on a hillside property, which is defined as a minor physical improvement under San Rafael Municipal Code (SRMC) § 14.25.040. The design of the residence is consistent with most applicable development standards but deviates significantly from the *Design Guidelines to All Hillside Residential Development Projects*. Staff is requesting the Board review the proposed design and recommend approval, approval with conditions, redesign or denial to the Zoning Administrator.

REQUESTED ENTITLEMENT

The proposed project is subject to review, and approval of the entitlement described below. Staff request the Design Review Board (DRB) to provide design-related comments and recommendations to the Zoning Administrator on the requested Environmental and Design Review Permit.

- **Environmental and Design Review (ED21-011).** San Rafael Municipal Code (SRMC) § 14.25.040, specifies that new construction of a single-family residence is classified as a Minor Physical Improvement, which is subject to review and approval by the Zoning Administrator. Per SRMC § 14.25.070, the Design Review Board (DRB) is being asked to advise on the appropriateness of the development proposal and to recommend approval, approval with conditions, redesign or denial to the Zoning Administrator.

PROPERTY FACTS

The following table provides an overview of General Plan and Zoning designations for the project site and immediately surrounding area as well as existing developed land uses. In addition, this section provides an overview of the project’s compliance with applicable development standards set forth in Planned Development District (PD) 1808 and SRMC § 14.12.030.

Table 1: Designations and Existing Uses

Location	General Plan Designation	Zoning Designation	Existing Land-Use
Project Site:	HRR	PD1808-H	Single-Family Residential
North:	PROS	P/OS	Open Space
South:	HRR	PD1808-H	Single-Family Residential
East:	HRR	PD/R2a-H	Single-Family Residential
West:	HRR	R2a-H	Condominiums

HRR = Hillside Resource Residential; PROS = Parks, Recreation, and Open Space; PD = Planned Development; P/OS = Public/Open Space; R2a = Single-Family Residential; -H = Hillside Development Overlay District

Table 2: Development Standards Summary (PD1808)

Development Standard	Required/Permitted	Proposed	Consistent
Minimum lot area	12.83 acres	12.83 acres (no change)	Yes
Maximum Height	30 feet	16 feet	Yes
Maximum Gross Building Area	6,500 sq. ft.	5,507 sq. ft.	Yes
Parking	Two covered spaces Two guest spaces	Two covered spaces Two guest spaces	Yes
Architectural Standards	PD 1808 approved a residence specific to Lot B	The proposed residence does not comply with the approved residence.	No

SITE DESCRIPTION & SETTING

The project site is located north of Margarita Drive, from where the property is accessible. The property is bordered by single-family residential properties at the south, southwest, and southeast, and public open space and Harry Barbier Memorial Park at the north, northwest, and northeast. The majority of the property is undisturbed hillside, with an existing graded portion at the south designated for development.

Building Envelope

Ordinance No. 1808 for PD 1808 (Attachment A) designates a “building envelope” in which all built features at the site must be contained:

“Building Envelopes” and the open space reservation within Lot B are established on the Site Plan prepared by Lawrence Doyle and Associates. Structures requiring permits including buildings, accessory structures, pools, decks and similar facilities shall be constructed only within such “Building Envelopes.” No building or accessory structures shall be permitted outside the “Building Envelopes”. Landscaping, fencing, driveway and entryway improvements as defined under Section 7 below and indicated on the approved development plan and site utilities and fire protection facilities shall be permitted outside the “Building Envelopes.”



Figure 1. Subject Property

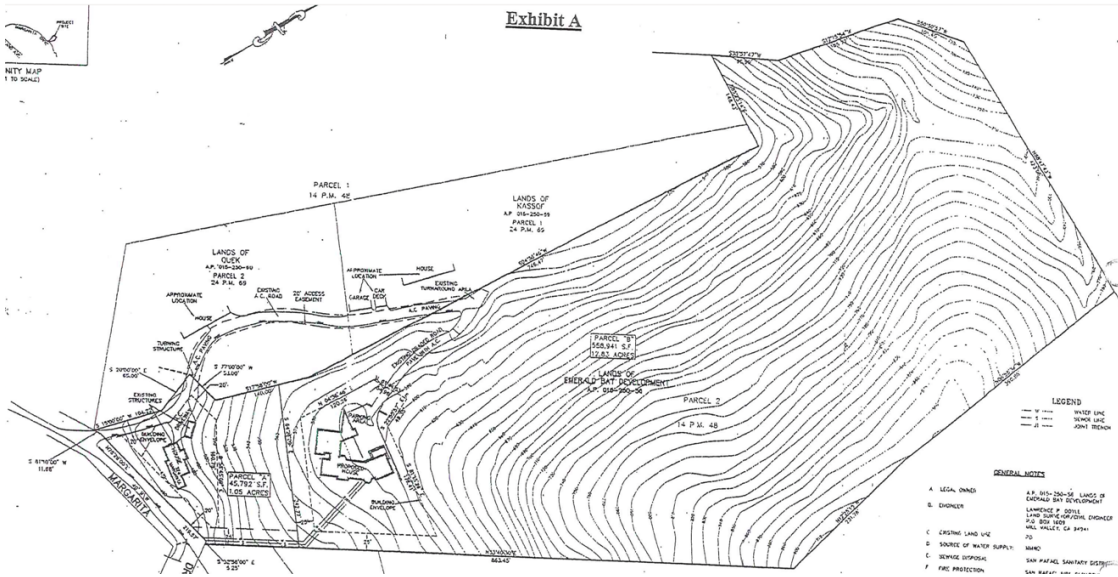


Figure 2. Recorded Map with "Building Envelope"

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Site Plan

The project proposes to construct an approximately 3,990 sq. ft. single-family home with an accompanying approximately 1,296 sq. ft. pool, and an approximately 1,767 sq. ft. detached garage. Both structures are one-story tall with flat roofs and overhanging eaves. The project includes a new paved driveway and turnaround. Retaining walls that range in height from 4 feet to 9 feet tall are proposed in order to clear space for the proposed driveway.



Figure 3. Proposed Site Plan

Floor Plan

The proposed single-family residence includes a central dining and living area flanked by guest and master bedrooms and a separate closet. The detached accessory structure includes a two-car garage, a storage space, and an additional guest bedroom.

Architecture, Colors, and Materials

The project is designed in a Miesian style, as a single rectangular primary structure with predominantly glass walls and a flat roof. The glass walls are interrupted with dark mullions, and remaining wall surfaces appear as solid concrete. The flat roof extends to overhanging eaves with wide vertical fascias. A pool extends from the southeast-face portion of the residence supported by unarticulated retaining walls (maximum 17 feet tall). The non-glass surfaces are shown on the renderings in an off-white neutral color.

Access and Circulation

Vehicular access to the site would be provided via Grand Avenue and would use the existing, approximately 30-foot wide driveway, which provides access to two uncovered parking spaces, the passenger loading zone, and the covered parking area, which is located on the first floor of the proposed building as shown in Figure 2 above. From the covered parking area, access to the main portion of the first floor is provided via one set of interior swinging doors near the ADA parking stalls, and one interior swinging door at the southwest portion of the parking area. Bicycle and pedestrian access to the site is provided via existing and proposed facilities, including short-term bicycle parking on Lincoln Avenue, and long-term bicycle parking on the interior portion of the first floor. Access throughout the site is provided via interior and exterior stairs and an elevator.

Landscaping, Lighting, and Fencing

The proposed landscaping is currently proposed to be minimal at the site, with no current plan for fencing or additional retaining walls apart from those that surround the pool. A lighting plan has not been provided.

ANALYSIS

San Rafael Municipal Code (Title 14 – Zoning)

The property is consistent with all the property development standards set forth in SRMC Section 14.12.030.

Table 3: Development Standards (SRMC § 14.12.030)

Development Standard	Required/Permitted	Proposed	Consistent
	On any downhill slope a twenty-foot (20') height limit measured from existing grade shall be observed.		
Building Stepback	On non-downhill slope, walls facing front and side property lines shall have a twenty-foot (20') height limit measured from existing grade shall be observed within all areas within fifteen feet (15') of the maximum building envelope limit.	No wall on the project exceeds 20'	Yes

Table 3: Development Standards (SRMC § 14.12.030)

Development Standard	Required/Permitted	Proposed	Consistent
Natural State	A minimum area of twenty-five percent (25%) of the lot area plus the percentage figure of average slope, not to exceed a maximum of eighty-five percent (85%),	90%	Yes
Gross Building Square Footage	The maximum permitted gross building square footage of all structures (including garages and accessory structures over one hundred twenty (120) square feet) is limited to two thousand five hundred (2,500) square feet plus ten percent (10%) of the lot area with the maximum gross square footage set at six thousand five hundred (6,500) square feet.	6,500 sq. ft.	Yes
Ridgeline Development	Development of new structures within one hundred (100) vertical feet of a visually significant ridgeline.	Addressed via the "Building Envelope" in PD1808	Yes
Parking Requirements	Two covered spaces Two guest spaces	Two covered spaces Two guest spaces	Yes
Street and Driveways	New street and driveway grades shall not exceed eighteen percent (18%)	New driveway at 18% grade	Yes

Design Guidelines Applicable to All Hillside Residential Development Projects

While the proposed project is generally consistent with the *Design Guidelines Applicable to All Hillside Residential Development Projects*, the proposed colors and materials of the project do not reflect those recommended in said guidelines.

General Site Design Criteria

The proposed project is consistent with the general site design criteria as it:

- Contributes to the hillside character of the residential neighborhood as a unique design with a low profile
- Complies with the required hillside development standards, including containing the proposed structures within the established "building envelope"
- Does not have a significant impact on the existing natural features at the site
- Does not block or negatively contribute to any existing significant views, or impact the privacy of neighboring properties



Preservation of Existing Natural Features

The proposed new structures will be entirely contained within the established “building envelope”, and so there will be no additional impact on the existing natural features at the site.

Hillside Architectural Character

The DRB is being asked to comment on the proposed design features that do not align with applicable design criteria outlined below.

GUIDELINE	PROPOSED	STAFF ANALYSIS
BUILDING FORM		
New Hillside Residential Architecture in San Rafael should continue the dominant pattern of one- and two-story buildings with tree canopied spaces around them.	The project proposes two one-story structures with minimal landscaping.	<i>While little landscaping is proposed, there will not be a significant difference from the current state of the hillside.</i>
All buildings should have shadow reliefs created by modest overhangs, minor projections (greater on uphill elevations), recesses and plan offsets.	The building forms proposed are not articulated in shapes but include generous overhanging eaves.	
Large unbroken expanses of wall should be avoided	<p>The glass elevations of the proposed primary residence and accessory structure are articulated with differing materials and substantial mullions.</p> <p>The concrete portions of the primary residence and accessory structure and retaining wall of the pool are not articulated, creating large expanses of unbroken walls.</p>	<p><i>Textured materials or additional detailing could create more articulation on the solid portions of the structures and pool retaining wall.</i></p> <p><i>Additional landscaping could also provide screening of the more prominent walls.</i></p>

ROOF FORMS AND PLAN OFFSETS		
<p>Give careful consideration to views of rooftops from other hillside areas, adjacent roads and uphill properties.</p> <p>Flat roofs that require membrane or built-up roofing materials are discouraged except in small and non-visible areas or when approved by the Design Review Board.</p> <p>Allow small areas of flat roofs only in small less visible areas.</p>	<p>The two structures at the site are proposed with flat roofs and extended eaves. The presence of the flat roof will be minimally apparent from neighboring properties and public areas, and the eaves will provide articulation and partially shaded areas.</p>	<p><i>Materials and colors with complimentary earth tones could further minimize with roof plane.</i></p>
BUILDING MATERIALS, TEXTURE AND COLOR		
<p>Color selection should show evidence of coordination with the predominant colors and values of the surrounding landscape. This is to minimize contrast of the structure with its background when viewed from the surrounding community.</p> <p>Roof colors should tend toward darker earth tones. Darker colors are less conspicuous when viewed from a distance.</p>	<p>The project is currently shown with lighter colors, predominately at the exterior walls, retaining walls, and roof facias.</p>	<p><i>Darker colors or more neutral colors to complement the existing hillside would minimize the contrast of the design against the natural hillside</i></p>
Encouraged Building Materials		
<i>Exterior Walls:</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wood siding (fire resistance is an important consideration here) - Exposed wood structural members - Natural colored brick or stone masonry - Natural colored cement plaster 	<p>Glass and concrete</p>	
<i>Roofs:</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fire resistant wood shakes with thick butts, with Fire Department approval - Flat Concrete Shingles of earthtone color - Flat Clay Tile of earth tone color - Composition shingles (with thick butts) of earthtone color 	<p><i>No roof material has been noted</i></p>	
Discouraged Building Materials		
<i>Exterior Walls:</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Large areas of glass. - Reflective glass. - Plastic materials made to resemble masonry or stone. - Wood shingles and shakes. 	<p>Large areas of glass</p>	<p><i>The specific glass type chosen should mitigate the effects of large glass planes as much as possible, including minimizing glare and nighttime light pollution</i></p>
<i>Roofs:</i>		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High contrast or bright colors. - Built up roofing, if seen from above, except in small areas. - Highly reflective or shiny materials. - Non-fire-resistant materials. 	<p><i>No roof material has been noted</i></p>	<p><i>A dark or neutral colored roof would better compliment the hillside</i></p>
<p>Walls, Fences and Accessory Structures</p>		
<p>Downslope (from the structure) walls not to exceed three (3) feet in height unless approved by the Design Review Board. Where an additional retained portion is necessary due to unusual or extreme conditions (such as lot configuration, steep slope or road design), then the use of terraced retaining structures shall be considered on an individual lot basis. Terraced walls shall not exceed three (3) feet in height.</p>	<p>The proposed pool is designed with an approximately 17 ft. retaining wall at the southeast.</p> <p>The project also proposes 4-ft. to 9-ft. retaining walls along the proposed new driveway.</p>	<p><i>See below</i></p>
<p>All buildings should have shadow reliefs created by modest overhangs, minor projections (greater on uphill elevations), recesses and plan offsets.</p>	<p>Shallow eaves at the roof are proposed</p>	
<p>Retaining wall structures holding back grade to accommodate a patio or terrace shall conform to the natural hillside profile as much as possible. <i>Excessively high retaining walls are prohibited.</i></p>	<p>In addition to the proposed 4-ft. to 9-ft. retaining walls along the proposed new driveway, the proposed pool is designed with an approximately 17 ft. retaining wall at the southeast</p>	<p><i>Creating multiple and smaller terraced walls; or utilizing alternative siding and/or additional landscaping could improve the appearance of the wall(s).</i></p>

NEIGHBORHOOD CORRESPONDENCE

Notice of hearing for the project was conducted in accordance with noticing requirements contained in Chapter 29 of the Zoning Ordinance. A Notice of Public Hearing was mailed to all property owners and occupants within a 300-foot radius of the subject site and all other interested parties, 15 calendar days prior to the date of all meetings, including this hearing. Public notice was also posted on the subject site 15 calendar days prior to the date of all meetings, including this hearing. Staff have not received any public comments, as of the posting of this staff report.

CONCLUSION

Staff request input from the DRB on the issues raised in this staff report with regards to the consistency of the project with specific provisions in the Design Guidelines Applicable to All Hillside Residential Development Projects. The DRB may recommend approval, approval with conditions, redesign or denial to the Zoning Administrator for this Environmental and Design Review application.

EXHIBITS

1. [Ordinance 1808](#)
2. [Design Guidelines Applicable to All Hillside Residential Development Projects](#)
3. [Project Civil Site Plan](#)
4. [Project Renderings](#)