



**Design Review Board  
Regular Meeting**

**Tuesday, April 18, 2023 7:00 P.M.  
AGENDA**

**Participate In-Person:**

**San Rafael City Council Chambers  
1400 Fifth Avenue, San Rafael, CA 94901  
Or**

**Participate Virtually:**

**Watch on Webinar: <https://tinyurl.com/drb-2023>  
Telephone: 1 (669) 444-9171  
Meeting ID: 885 6816 1418**

This meeting will be held in-person. The public may attend in-person or participate virtually using Zoom.

How to participate in the meeting virtually:

- Submit public comment in writing before 4:00 p.m. the day of the meeting to [PlanningPublicComment@cityofsanrafael.org](mailto:PlanningPublicComment@cityofsanrafael.org)
  - Join the Zoom webinar and use the 'raise hand' feature to provide verbal public comment.
  - Dial-in to Zoom's telephone number using the meeting ID and press \*9 to raise your hand, and \*6 to unmute yourself, then provide verbal public comment.
- If you experience technical difficulties during the meeting, please contact [PlanningPublicComment@cityofsanrafael.org](mailto:PlanningPublicComment@cityofsanrafael.org)

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Kovalsky called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Chair Kovalsky then invited Staff & Senior Planner Jeff Ballantine to call roll.

**RECORDING OF MEMBERS PRESENT AND ABSENT**

Present: Chair Sharon Kovalsky  
Vice Chair Jeff Kent  
Board Member Michael Alexin  
Board Member Stewart Summers

Absent: Board Member Sarah Rege  
Alternate Board Member Donald Blayney

Also Present: Jeff Ballantine, Staff, Senior Planner & DRB Secretary

**PUBLIC NOTIFICATION OF MEETING PROCEDURES**

Chair Kovalsky invited Staff & Senior Planner, Jeff Ballantine, to inform the public that members they can provide public comment either in person in the Council Chambers, by telephone or via zoom with the raise hand feature. Written comments submitted prior to the meeting time would be read aloud into the record during the public comment portion of each item.

Chair Kovalsky reviewed the procedures for the meeting.

## **URGENT ORAL/EMAIL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Chair Kovalsky called for any comments from the public on items NOT on the agenda. There were no public comments.

## **CONSENT CALENDAR**

Chair Kovalsky invited public comment on the Consent Calendar. There was no comment on the Consent Calendar.

### **1. Approval of the Design Review Board Meeting Minutes of April 18, 2023**

Member Alexin moved and Member Kent seconded to approve the Minutes as submitted.

AYES: Members: Alexin, Kent, Summers

NOES: Members: None

ABSENT: Members: Rege

ABSTAIN: Members: Kovalsky

Motion passes.

## **ACTION CALENDAR**

Chair Kovalsky introduced the Action Calendar and invited staff to present the Staff Report.

### **2. 323 Prospect Drive – Retaining Wall**

Request for recommendation to City Staff on an Administrative Environmental and Design Review Permit application for a maximum seven-foot-tall retaining wall with a three foot five inches tall railing within the required front yard on a hillside property; APN 011-033-09; Residential District (R5); Permit # ED23-012, PLAN22-175

**Project Planner:** Renee Nickenig ([renee.nickenig@cityofsanrafael.org](mailto:renee.nickenig@cityofsanrafael.org))

*Recommended Action – Review and provide input on items discussed in staff report*

Assistant Planner, Renee Nickenig, provided a staff presentation on the project.

Applicant Team gave a presentation on the project.

Applicant Team and Staff responded to questions from the Board Members.

Chair Kovalsky asked for public comments. The property owners of 323 Prospect Drive provided public comment.

Board Members provided comments.

Member Summers moved, Member Alexin seconded recommendation that City Staff approve the project City Staff confirms with the Fire Department that they do not have concerns if a vehicle were to park in the area proposed for grading in front of the proposed retaining wall.

AYES: Members: Alexin, Kent, Kovalsky, Summers

NOES: Members: None

ABSENT: Members: Rege

ABSTAIN: Members: None

Motion passes.

### **3. 50 Merrydale Road – New 12-Unit Residential Building**

Request for a Conceptual Design Review of a new, 12-unit residential building. The project includes a proposed lot split of the property on which there is an existing 16-unit residential building and a density bonus request which would result in waivers to deviate from the existing development standards; APN 179-221-03; High Density Residential Zoning District (HR1.8); Permit # CDR23-001, PLAN22-180

**Project Planner:** Renee Nickenig ([renee.nickenig@cityofsanrafael.org](mailto:renee.nickenig@cityofsanrafael.org))

*Recommended Action – Review and provide input on items discussed in staff report*

Assistant Planner, Renee Nickenig, provided a staff presentation on the project.

Applicant Team gave a presentation on the project.

Applicant Team and Staff responded to questions from the Board Members.

Chair Kovalsky asked for public comments. No public comment was provided.

Board Members provided the following comments on this conceptual design review:

1. Consider providing more articulation on the exterior walls of the garage such as increasing the number and/or size of windows and/or providing window trim.
2. Consider proposing trees and landscaping along the eastern edge of the property to provide an improved buffer between the freeway and the proposed building. For example, consider proposing taller evergreen hedges for the planters located east of the proposed building.
3. Consider improving ADA accessibility such that someone in a wheelchair can access the street from the proposed building.
4. Consider providing additional private and/or common open space.
5. Provide paint samples for DRB to confirm that the proposed “Timber Bark” color of the lap siding of the upper levels is compatible with the proposed “Warm Gray” stucco siding of the garage level.
6. Show proposed amenities for common outdoor areas on the project plans.

### **DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

Jeff Ballantine provided an update on Planning Commission’s consideration of an Environmental and Design Review Permit application for 1515 4<sup>th</sup> Street during their April 11, 2023 meeting.

### **BOARD COMMUNICATION**

Member Alexin requested Staff to confirm the attendance policy of the DRB at the next DRB meeting. Member Summers expressed a desire to remove the hybrid option for DRB meetings and require all attendees to participate in person.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Kovalsky adjourned the meeting at 8:09 p.m.



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JEFF BALLANTINE, Senior Planner