

CITY OF LAFAYETTE
DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION
Minutes

LAFAYETTE LIBRARY & LEARNING CENTER
Arts & Sciences Discovery Center
3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Lafayette, CA

January 11, 2010
7:00 p.m.

- 1. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Commission Vice-Chair Andre Ptaszynski.
- 2. Commissioners present: Commission Vice-Chair Ptaszynski, Commissioners Ken Hertel and Bill Marquand; and Planning Commission Liaison Karen Maggio.

Excused: Commission Chair Tom Lee and Commissioner Bob Cleaver

Staff: Sarah Allen, Planning Intern; Lindy Chan, Associate Planner
- 3. **ADOPTION OF AGENDA:** Commissioner Hertel moved to adopt the agenda; Commissioner Marquand seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous consent. (3-0-0)
- 4. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** None
- 5. **STUDY SESSIONS:**

A. **SS01-10 JENSEN-PTASZYNSKI ARCHITECTS (APPLICANT), SCOTT & HEIDI MCLEOD (OWNERS) R-40 ZONING:** Request for an informational Study Session with the Design Review Commission to discuss plans to: (1) substantially remodel an existing 2,460 SF two-story single-family residence, (2) construct 2,886 SF one-story and two-story additions with a maximum building height of 29'-6", (3) grade ~ 165 cubic yards of soil (75 CY cut, 90 CY fill), (4) install a recreation court, (5) remove two non-protected trees, (6) widen and extend an existing driveway, and (7) relocate an existing vehicular entry gate closer to the street, located at 1602 Rancho View Road, APN 169-100-009.
Recommendation: This is an information only item. No action will be taken by the Commission.
Project Planner: Michael P. Cass

Vice-Chair Ptaszynski recused himself from the study session, and Commissioner Marquand took over as chair for this agenda item. Ms. Allen requested the Design Review Commission, in providing comment to the applicant, address the proposed relocation of the entry gate closer to the street.

Commissioner Hertel disclosed that he believed he had designed a house plan for a previous owner of the property; however, the project had not been brought to a public hearing and did not come to fruition. The property owner confirmed that he had received a copy of that plan when he purchased the home. Commissioner Hertel stated that given the timeframe involved, he could be unbiased in providing his professional opinion as a Design Review Commissioner to the current property owner.

Jim Brencic, of Jensen-Ptaszynski Architects, was present at the meeting with property owner Scott McLeod. Mr. Brencic described the property as approximately one-acre with substantial tree screening around the perimeter and an existing 6-7 foot hedge along Rancho View Road at the front of the property. The proposed project would utilize the existing vehicle access. He noted that surrounding residences were sparse and well spaced from the subject residence, with the closest home 20-feet from the eastern property line. The property enjoys fabulous northern views of the hills and a slight Mt. Diablo view. Mr. Brencic noted an interesting characteristic of the site that the property sloped from west to east, dropping by approximately 20-feet.

Mr. Brencic described the existing home as sub-par for the property but its siting worked well with the existing access drive. The house presents as a one-story elevation on the south, north and west sides. The structure has a lower level carport with a deck above on the southeast side. The property owners like the way the site works currently and their proposal would reuse and recycle much of the existing construction. Mr. Brencic stated that the driveway would be in the same location with some

1 improvements and modification. In an effort to minimize grading, they would utilize the existing floor
2 structure and many of the exterior walls, while demolishing most of the interior walls. There was also an
3 existing lower level guest suite that would be retained.
4

5 Mr. Brencic noted the location of two off-street guest parking spaces. He described the entry as a gentle
6 cascade of stairs leading to a landing at the front porch. The interior floor plan would have a central core
7 public space with a great room and game room. All service spaces (kitchen, bedrooms) would wrap
8 around that central core area. The rear of the house would take advantage of the views to the north with
9 a series of terraces, including one large terrace over the three-car garage and workshop area below. The
10 mansard roof would act as the guardrail. The series of terraces would cascade down into the backyard
11 area with gently sloping landscaping.
12

13 The house would retain its single story elevations on all sides except the eastern elevation. There would
14 be porches on both the front and rear of the house. Mr. Brencic said the house would have a farmhouse
15 character with painted wood siding in dark earth tones and aluminum clad wood windows. He noted
16 design features, such as extending the mansard roof and adding columns that match the front and rear of
17 the home to help reduce the mass of the building on the east side. Mr. Brencic reiterated their goal to use
18 as much of the existing house and driveway as possible in the project, and to minimize the amount of
19 grading.
20

21 Commissioner Marquand asked if the applicants would retain the existing front fencing and landscaping.
22 Mr. Brencic said that they would retain much of the front hedge and fencing but planned to move the entry
23 gate more toward the street to create a more graceful entrance to the house from the guest parking area.
24 He anticipated there might be some engineering modifications necessary in the driveway area to create a
25 storm water retention area.
26

27 Commissioner Hertel asked about any significant grading outside the building footprint. Mr. Brencic
28 advised they would be lowering the grade at the existing carport to construct the three-car garage.
29 However, he anticipated the need for fill at the terraced areas and hoped to balance the cut and fill as
30 much as possible.
31

32 Commissioner Hertel asked about the gate relocation in terms of accommodating the guest parking area,
33 as well a turnaround space for emergency vehicles and delivery trucks. Mr. McLeod responded that the
34 existing driveway was about a foot short of the required minimum 16-foot width for fire department
35 access. He noted that the proposed location for the gate was still significantly off the street. Mr. Brencic
36 described how the space would provide adequate width, property access and turnaround space for fire
37 equipment. Commissioner Hertel referred to public access, noting that the City of Lafayette and/or the
38 Fire District had recently set guidelines for offsetting private entry gates from the street, and
39 recommended the applicants determine whether their gate plan meets those depth requirements.
40

41 Commissioner Hertel asked about the continued use of the guest suite with kitchen as a secondary unit.
42 Mr. Brencic confirmed that the property owner did not intend to apply for a second unit and would
43 decommission the existing kitchen space in the guest unit.
44

45 Commissioner Hertel thought the plan was charming but noted that the proposed plate heights and
46 ceilings gave him pause. He asked about the need for the volume on the east side, commenting that the
47 dormer on the south side implied an area for future expansion. Mr. Brencic responded that the need was
48 generated by the use of existing wall forms at the front of the house. Commissioner Hertel commented
49 that the front porch roof helped mitigate the mass and provided shadow line.
50

51 Commissioner Hertel suggested that the applicants also look at some additional landscaping between the
52 driveway/sport court area and the eastern property line.
53

54 Commissioner Marquand noted that the subject home's main view area was to the north. He asked about
55 the proposal's impact on the southern neighbors' view shed. Mr. Brencic stated that the subject home's
56 finished floor elevation was at 126; the southern neighbors' floor elevation was at 120 and was a two-
57 story house. The neighbors' upper level view would be unabated. Mr. McLeod noted that the neighbors'

1 had an unabated view of Mt. Diablo as their primary view. He said that he has discussed the proposal
2 with the neighbors and received no objections to date.
3

4 Commissioner Marquand expressed concerned about providing adequate gateway turnaround space.
5

6 The study session was opened to public comment. Hearing none, Commissioner Marquand called for
7 Commission comment.
8

9 Commissioner Hertel noted that it was a large, open rural lot with well-spaced neighbors. He pointed out
10 that there was a downslope neighbor to the east and the applicants needed to pay attention to view and
11 privacy mitigation in this area, which he felt would be an easy task to accomplish with additional
12 vegetation. Commissioner Hertel referred to the island in front of the guest-parking bay and noted it was
13 an opportunity to provide additional landscaping. He commented that the eastern edge of the property
14 needed some additional landscape mitigation. With regard to the 5:12 roof pitch and tall plate heights to
15 the east, Commissioner Hertel noted that the Design Review Commission has been rigorous about not
16 allowing bootleg second floors and would likely require roof trusses in that area to assure it was not
17 developable space. He thought the proposed grading made sense, particularly if the cut and fill could be
18 balanced. Commissioner Hertel recommended the applicants review the entry gate layout to provide
19 adequate turnaround space from the street. He thought the rural vernacular of the design with its multiple
20 porches seemed an appropriate expression for the neighborhood.
21

22 Planning Commission liaison Maggio saw no planning concerns, but applauded the applicants' reuse of
23 the existing house and minimal grading.
24

25 Commissioner Marquand commented that his views of the project were in line with Commissioner Hertel's
26 comments in terms of elevation concerns. He suggested giving precedence to landscaping at the corner.
27 On the eastern elevation, he preferred to see a one-story stepped up massing to two-story, although it
28 was not as much of an issue on this particular lot. He suggested the applicants consider taking the
29 mansard roof half way into the gable and bring it to a door, and then letting the landscaping turn the
30 corner to break down the large wall face. Commissioner Marquand would like to see documentation
31 showing the subject home's elevation compared to the southern neighbor. Overall, he felt the applicants
32 had a fine concept with the use of original construction, circulation and siting, noting that it seemed the
33 natural way to utilize the site.
34

35 6. **CONSENT CALENDAR:** Vice-Chair Ptaszynski rejoined the meeting. Commissioner Hertel
36 moved to approve the consent calendar. Commissioner Marquand seconded the motion, which carried
37 by unanimous consent. (3-0-0)
38

39 A. **NOVEMBER 24, 2009 DRAFT MEETING MINUTES Recommendation:** Approve
40

41 B. **HDP58-06 & V19-09 BRIAN WIEBER (APPLICANT & OWNER), R-20 ZONING:** Request for
42 Change of Condition Approval (1) to allow a lighter exterior house color Fair Winds (cream) than
43 the approved beige and (2) Variance approval to allow terrace walls within the side and rear yard
44 setbacks which exceed 6 feet in height within the Hillside Overlay District, located at 1093 Upper
45 Happy Valley Road. APN 247-081-002. **Recommendation:** Continue, without discussion, to
46 January 25, 2010 to allow for additional information to be provided to staff by County Building
47 Inspection. **Project Planner:** Glenda Warmoth
48

49 7. **SIGNS:** None
50

51 8. **CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS** None
52

53 9. **NEW PUBLIC HEARINGS:**
54

55 A. **DR31-08 WARD-YOUNG ARCHITECTS (APPLICANT), MATT BRANAGH & MIKE**
56 **BRANAGH (OWNERS), C-ZONING:** Request for Design Review pursuant to condition of approval #12 of
57 DR31-08 which requires Design Review of the project details including lighting, colors, materials, façade
58 improvements, and landscaping with sensitivity to the scale of the materials for the approved ~5,500 sq.

1 ft. three-story office building (two stories of offices over ground floor parking) with a maximum height of
2 35-feet located at 3722 Mt. Diablo Blvd. APN 241-020-017. **Recommendation:** Consider the application,
3 take public testimony, and continue the matter to allow the applicant to make suggested modifications.

4 **Project Planner:** Lindy Chan
5

6 Ms. Chan reported that this project was approved by the Planning Commission on April 2, 2009 for a
7 three-story office building at the east end of Mt. Diablo Boulevard. A condition of the project approval was
8 that the details come back to the Design Review Commission for final review and approval. In particular,
9 the Planning Commission requested the Design Review Commission to focus on colors, materials, site
10 improvements and landscaping. The Planning Commission desired the Design Review Commission to
11 be particularly sensitive to the scale of the materials.
12

13 The Design Review Commission previously considered the project in February 2009, and provided
14 preliminary direction to the applicants in terms of landscaping, colors, materials and the screenover the
15 tower element. In presenting the project to the Planning Commission, many of the Design Review
16 Commission's comments and concerns were addressed in the Planning Commission's approval. In the
17 current presentation, the applicant made further modifications, as follows:

- 18 ▪ Decreased the Hardie trim to 9-1/4" with a 1/2" gap
- 19 ▪ Provided additional materials on the signage and lighting
- 20 ▪ Provided a revised landscape plan
21

22 Staff found that the darker color for the horizontal siding was a vast improvement to the color previously
23 presented to the Design Review Commission, and would help to soften the building's appearance.
24 Additionally, the red trim color has been changed from a copper red to a deeper redwood. Staff also
25 found the change in the width of the horizontal boards would be an improvement to the project's scale.
26 Ms. Chan noted that while staff was supportive of the color renderings, the color samples provided
27 appeared lighter than the rendering. Staff recommended the actual colors match the rendered elevations.
28 The same recommendation was made for the color of the front retaining wall.
29

30 The light poles initially proposed had been modern in design. The applicant has modified that proposal
31 with a more traditional dark colored lamppost that was more in keeping with other lampposts in the area.
32 Staff supported the revised submittal but wanted to confirm that the height of those posts were in the 9-
33 foot range. No revised light fixtures for the building were received by staff. Staff could support the
34 originally proposed sconce fixtures, but recommended the color of those fixtures was dark.
35

36 The applicant revised the landscape plan to be all Coast live oaks, which change was supported by both
37 the Planning Commission and staff. Staff suggested an additional oak be planted directly east of the
38 stairway to soften its appearance.
39

40 Ms. Chan reviewed the signage proposed. The signs would include the building name and building
41 address. The applicants propose a wooden sign with raised metal letters, reading "The Reservoir,"
42 attached to the concrete wall at the southwest corner of the lot. The building address would be on a
43 mesh screen background with cast metal numbers mounted on the building at the northeast.
44

45 Staff found the address proposal acceptable, but felt the business name sign was too ornate for the
46 building's simple design. Staff felt it would be better to keep with the clean lines of the building and not
47 introduce new materials into the sign. Staff's suggestion was that the sign be revised to replicate the
48 building's look and feel or be incorporated onto the building itself, on the water tank, the tower element or
49 along the mesh screen on the southeast corner.
50

51 Ms. Chan requested the Design Review Commission's review and comment and recommended
52 continuing the application for further modification as follows:

- 53 ▪ Submit color samples for the body (cement plaster) and retaining wall that better match the
54 colored rendering
- 55 ▪ Provide the height of the proposed light poles (recommended at 9-feet)
- 56 ▪ Provide cut sheets and a lighting plan for the office building
- 57 ▪ Incorporate an oak tree directly east of the stairway

- 1 ▪ Consider a revised sign of the building name that better reflects the building's architecture and
2 design
3

4 Planning Commission liaison Maggio asked whether the project still sought LEED certification. Ms. Chan
5 confirmed that it did.
6

7 Commissioner Hertel asked about the Hardie siding and, while understanding it was part of the LEED
8 component, questioned whether there had been discussion at the Planning Commission or with the
9 applicant to make it real wood siding. Ms. Chan did not believe that was ever a comment or direction
10 from the Planning Commission.
11

12 Commissioner Hertel asked the same question regarding the red window wall. Ms. Chan stated that
13 Planning Commissioner Chastain had commented that the red color might not help to soften the
14 building's appearance and had questioned whether it was the best choice. Planning staff did not have a
15 problem with red, finding the newer redwood color proposed softer and richer than the previous copper
16 shade.
17

18 Scott Thompson, of Ward-Young Architects, was present at the meeting with Matt Branagh, one of the
19 property owners. Mr. Thompson appreciated staff's thorough and creative review of the project's
20 development. He offered responses to the points raised in Planning staff's report. Mr. Thompson
21 provided new color chips that better matched the color renderings, noting their agreement that the
22 earthier tones would help soften and ground the building's appearance. He also stated that they were
23 open to suggestions regarding the signage and described an alternate steel plate with etched letter
24 design for the Commission's consideration. Mr. Branagh stated that one of the reasons for the proposed
25 signage was the Veterans' concern that the new building and its parking area be clearly identified as
26 separate from the Veterans' building and parking lot.
27

28 Mr. Thompson referred to samples provided of light poles, which he described as 9-feet in height and a
29 dark bronze color. He noted there would also be a few landscape lights installed.
30

31 Mr. Thompson commented that the use of Hardie board versus real wood was connected to maintenance
32 and longevity, especially as it would be on the south elevation of the building. Additionally, he noted that
33 the Hardie planks would be very level and straight, and given that the siding would stand off the building,
34 there was concern that over time real wood starts to show imperfections.
35

36 Mr. Thompson reviewed staff's recommendations and indicated their acceptance of the additional oak
37 tree, the recommended light pole height at 9-feet, providing cut sheets for light fixtures, and exterior
38 lighting plan. He stated that all of the exterior lighting, except a few path lights, would be recessed down
39 lighting using LED bulbs if possible.
40

41 Commissioner Hertel asked about the retaining wall along the street. Mr. Thompson described it a board-
42 form concrete with probably a 2'x8' pattern.
43

44 Planning Commission liaison Maggio commented that the Planning Commission was excited about the
45 building, and could see from the modifications described that the building details were all tying together.
46 She liked the color change and the use of red.
47

48 Commissioner Marquand asked about the front landscaping. He stated that he had liked the way it was
49 presented earlier, as if the building had landed in a field of wild grasses. However, he noted that the
50 equally spaced trees took away from that natural look.
51

52 Vice-Chair Ptaszynski asked about the material of the eyebrow roofs. Mr. Thompson said they were a
53 sheet metal bent fascia. Noting that these eyebrows would serve to shade the window walls, Vice-Chair
54 Ptaszynski wondered whether the applicants had considered making those roofs the same color as the
55 structure and the window walls. Mr. Thompson indicated it was an idea that could be considered.
56

57 Commissioner Hertel asked Ms. Chan whether the City Landscape Consultant's report and its
58 recommendations been acknowledged and incorporated into the new plans. Ms. Chan responded that

1 the applicants had largely addressed the City Landscape Consultant's comments. One of the changes
2 was to incorporate more of the oak trees north of the guest parking stalls and east of the parking lot.
3 There was also a DSIMPC report recommending Pistachio or Pyrus kawakamii; however, the Planning
4 Commission had been satisfied with the additional oak trees. The City Landscape Consultant's
5 comments also made reference to tree protection. Ms. Chan indicated that the applicants' have provided
6 an arborist report and Planning staff would take steps to ensure that appropriate measures were taken to
7 protect the existing oaks.

8
9 The hearing was opened to public comment. Hearing none, Vice-Chair Ptaszynski closed the public
10 hearing and called for Commission comment and action.

11
12 Commissioner Marquand thought it was a very handsome building that has come a long way since the
13 Design Review Commission's initial review. He commented that it showed a lot of good collaborative
14 effort and would be a great addition to Lafayette. Commissioner Marquand stated that it worked well as a
15 building on the boulevard and was an excellent solution given the site's constraints. He noted that his
16 major concern was that in the review process the building had become too self-effacing, mainly in
17 terms of the color scheme. Commenting that the initial proposal contained too stark a contrast between
18 the foreground and background of the building, the current version has been so toned down that it
19 seemed to be a foreground building pretending to be a background building. He encouraged there to be
20 a greater contrast between the front and the back, and suggested the color scheme come back in the
21 other direction. Commissioner Marquand noted that the minutes from the Design Review Commission's
22 last review contained comments from the Commission about the need for a sense of layering and three-
23 dimensionality that the color can accentuate. He also recommended that the trees in front be grouped in
24 a more natural fashion.

25
26 Commissioner Hertel supported Commissioner Marquand's comments. He saw the building as a
27 wonderful sculptural jewel providing a brilliant solution for a difficult lot. Commissioner Hertel agreed with
28 Commissioner Marquand's comment that the palette of materials had been washed out in the review
29 process. He felt the materials needed to be more authentic, suggesting a preference for windows in mill-
30 finished aluminum and the use of a natural wood screen to help tame the face of it. He could envision it
31 being a wonderful little industrial-tech building, but instead commented that it had been whitewashed with
32 banal colors for the City of Lafayette. He felt the color choices were ruining the masterpiece.
33 Commissioner Hertel commented that he loved the building but saw it being wrecked; noting that the only
34 honest material left was the perforated screen that would sit on this painted building like an oddity. He
35 also felt the board-form concrete provided another honest material. Commissioner Hertel also supported
36 Commissioner Marquand's comments about the landscape. He noted there were oaks cascading down
37 the hillside behind the building but the proposed front landscape was too rigid. He thought the additional
38 oak on the east side of the building as recommended by Planning staff would help further the cascade of
39 trees down from the hill and help to frame this masterpiece building. Commissioner Hertel reiterated that
40 he loved the building's architecture and design but felt it was being fog-sprayed in banal colors.

41
42 Vice-Chair Ptaszynski liked the mystery that the proposed colors provided, rather than the contrasts. He
43 commented that his feelings stemmed from the building being on a site closely associated to the Veterans
44 Building, which contained many natural materials. Vice-Chair Ptaszynski thought that if this building
45 expressed its industrial materials more emphatically it would fight with the Veterans' Building and did not
46 feel it would be appropriate for this location. He liked the mystery of the two somewhat similar colors and
47 did not think they would be confused one for the other; however, there would create a bit of ambiguity that
48 would cause interest and a second look at the building. Vice-Chair Ptaszynski did think there was
49 opportunity missed in not adding color to eyebrow roofs. He stated there was still another ambiguity in
50 the building caused by the auto entry and the pedestrian entry being at opposite ends of the building.
51 Vice-Chair Ptaszynski thought it would help to play up the small stairway leading to the pedestrian entry
52 from Mt. Diablo Blvd, which he stated looked like a service stair and an afterthought. He suggested it
53 could be more of a grand statement identifying where the pedestrian building entry was located and,
54 much like the signage, clarify the building's functionality. Overall, Vice-Chair Ptaszynski commended the
55 applicants for a wonderful job in responding to the Design Review Commission's comments.

56
57 Commissioner Hertel added that in looking at this wonderfully modern, clean and crisp building he was
58 drawn to the standard gravel-stop roof edge, which he found to be without the same creativity given the

1 rest of the building. Similarly, he was troubled by the sloping side entry versus the angular building
2 expression.
3

4 Commissioner Marquand suggested putting more of the art into the entry steps and the eave detail. He
5 noted one thing that he liked about the building was the Hardie board because it was a humble detail, and
6 as construction moves more toward green building it was an appropriate direction. He noted that it in
7 using these humble materials it was a matter of playing with the advancing and receding planes of color.
8 While he appreciated Commissioner Hertel's comments about authenticity of materials, he understood
9 the costs involved in it. Commissioner Marquand thought it would be great if they could create a really
10 nice front elevation in an affordable way that would set an example for other buildings. He commented
11 that there should be a contrast between the front plane and the stucco and was on board with the
12 materials proposed. He also liked the red and how the applicants have created that contrast.
13

14 Commissioner Hertel commented that the building in its form and detail reminded him of the Bentley
15 School gymnasium, and not the Veterans Building. He thought there should be diversity in the
16 architecture within the city. However, he did not feel that the Bentley gym would be as successful if
17 rendered in the colors proposed for this project. Commissioner Hertel observed that this was not a
18 suburban house but a modern building on the boulevard, and he felt the materials and colors were
19 washing out the energy of the architecture. He acknowledged that his comments represented a minority
20 opinion
21

22 Planning Commission liaison Maggio supported the use of the red color but was concerned that the green
23 tones be grayer and less blue so they did not clash with the grass.
24

25 Vice-Chair Ptaszynski found himself strangely in opposition to Commissioner Hertel's views. He
26 supported staff's comment about The Reservoir sign, which he felt was over-designed and detailed for
27 the boldness, simplicity and clarity of the building. Commissioner Hertel supported the alternate vertical
28 design presented at the meeting. Vice-Chair Ptaszynski agreed that the alternate design fit the building
29 better. Mr. Thompson stated that the vertical sign's location would be at the corner of the building and
30 have a height of 5-feet. Commissioner Marquand also supported the alternative design.
31

32 Commissioner Marquand called for the Commission's comments on recommended modifications to move
33 the project forward.
34

35 Vice-Chair Ptaszynski recommended that the eyebrow roofs be red, commenting that it would emphasize
36 the drama of the building being created and strengthen it considerably. Planning Commission liaison
37 Maggio commented that the change would separate those features from the Hardie board siding.
38 Commissioner Marquand supported that recommendation. Commissioner Hertel supported the concept
39 but not the materials.
40

41 Commissioner Marquand recommended lightening the Hardie board color. Vice-Chair Ptaszynski
42 suggested the same color for the Hardie board and the concrete. He also preferred the newer muted
43 color palette. Commissioner Hertel agreed the newer color palette was better.
44

45 Commissioner Hertel noted that the applicant's rendering and landscape plan included the use of
46 Ceanothus but felt the plant choice with its blue bouquet was the wrong choice for this green-gray
47 building. He suggested considering Arctostaphylos with its small red flower and stems.
48

49 Commissioner Marquand moved to continue DR31-08 to January 25, 2010, on consent calendar, to allow
50 the applicant time to make modifications as follows:

- 51 ▪ Prepare a new full color rendering and elevation views as presented at this meeting with the
52 recommended color revisions
- 53 ▪ Revise the eave to play up its thickness and change to the red color
- 54 ▪ Revise the stair design to accentuate it as a building entrance and exit
- 55 ▪ Modify the landscape plan to substitute the Ceanothus and group the trees in a more natural
56 fashion
- 57 ▪ Revise the building signage to the vertical sign presented at this meeting.
- 58 ▪ Lighting accepted as proposed

1
2 Commissioner Hertel suggested reviewing the choice of La Paloma gray for the concrete, as it appeared
3 a bit bluer than the other colors.
4

5 Commissioner Marquand added to the motion a review of the concrete color to make it a closer match in
6 color family to the rest of the palette.
7

8 Commissioner Hertel seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous consent. (3-0-0)
9

10 **B. HDP27-09 WILLIAM WOOD ARCHITECTS (APPLICANT), PETER & TARA KHOURY**
11 **(OWNERS), R-40 ZONING:** Request for: (1) Hillside Development Permit pursuant to Section 6-2015 of
12 the Lafayette Municipal Code ("LMC"), (2) Exception to permit development within a Class II Ridgeline
13 Setback pursuant to Section 6-2027 LMC, (3) Design Review approval pursuant to Section 6-1903(a)
14 LMC to construct a one-story 1,013 sq.ft. master bedroom addition with a maximum ridge height of ~24'
15 on the east side of the existing two-story single family residence, and (4) Grading Permit pursuant to
16 Section 3-701 LMC to grade 58 cu.yds. cut and 58 cu.yds. fill on a property located within the Hillside
17 Overlay District and Class II Ridgeline setback, at 3367 Kim Road, APN 167-040-051.

18 **Recommendation:** Consider the application, take public testimony, and forward the matter to the
19 Planning Commission with comments and a recommendation of approval.

20 **Project Planner:** Lindy Chan
21

22 Ms. Chan reported that the Design Review Commission reviewed the project for a two-story addition to an
23 existing two-story residence at a study session in October 2009. The subject property is located in the
24 Hillside Overlay District and a Class II Ridgeline setback area. The Commission was positive in initial
25 feedback on the architectural design and offered the following recommendations:

- 26 ■ Retain the character of the existing stucco structure
- 27 ■ Provide more detailing on the railings and posts to tie the addition into the existing home more
28 successfully
- 29 ■ Consider a darker color on the lower level to break-up the apparent massing
- 30 ■ Consider planting new smaller oaks rather than transplanting the existing mature ones
- 31 ■ Consider making the addition more compact and tighter to the house
- 32 ■ Consider echoing the change in the existing master bedroom and veranda below for the new
33 master bedroom
- 34 ■ Deck appears to wrap around to nowhere
- 35 ■ Provide attention to detailing to be consistent with the vocabulary of the existing residence
36

37 Ms. Chan advised that the applicant has made revisions and responded to the Design Review
38 Commission's direction as follows:

- 39 ■ Revised balcony around master bedroom to incorporate a covered archway veranda to match the
40 existing residence's architecture
- 41 ■ Revised the balcony handrail to compliment the style of the existing residence
- 42 ■ Shifted the addition 3-feet closer to the residence
- 43 ■ Provided a darker color to the lower level veranda and was open to continuing it to the existing
44 veranda at the center of the residence
- 45 ■ Proposed new oaks instead of transplanting existing
- 46 ■ Provided additional natural landscaping to transition the addition from the residence
- 47 ■ Reworked the exterior stairs closer to the existing residence making it more screened from offsite
48

49 Ms. Chan advised that the property was considered in 1998 for a siting and massing determination and
50 the building site was ultimately moved from the north side of the road to the south side in 2000. A lot line
51 adjustment was approved in 2002 to remove the northern portion of the property. Public notice was
52 mailed out about the application. No public comment has been received to date.
53

54 The application was forward to the City Engineer, EBMUD and the Fire Protection District. The City
55 Engineer offered no comment at this time, and the Fire Protection District offered standards comments
56 about continuing the fire sprinklers to the addition.

57 Staff found that the proposed siting was the best location for the addition. Ms. Chan noted that the
58 applicant stated that moving the addition any closer to the existing residence would interfere with the

1 office windows; however, staff offered that the office does have north and east facing windows and if a
2 skylight were incorporated, they could accommodate shifting the addition closer to the residence for a
3 more compact footprint, as well as preserving the existing 7" Live oak east of the residence.
4

5 Staff had mixed feelings about the revisions made by the applicant, offering comments as follows:

- 6 ■ Supported the covered archway below the proposed deck
- 7 ■ Supported, however, the previously shown open railing for the proposed deck
- 8 ■ Recommended replacing the current solid stucco patio with a hipped roof, as previously shown
- 9 ■ Recommended darker colors for the entire residence that is more in keeping with the previously
10 approved color. Staff could support the concept of different colors for the upper and lower floors
11 but both should be a darker hue, consistent with the hillside regulations for ridgeline properties
12 and upholding the conditions of the DR56-00 project approval.
- 13 ■ Recommended shielded light fixtures
- 14 ■ Recommended shortening the eastern portion of the proposed wrap around deck to preserve the
15 existing 7" oak tree
- 16 ■ Supported the landscape plan as submitted, but suggested that a few of the oak trees could be
17 shifted further west to mitigate offsite visibility from lower elevations

18
19 With the recommended modifications, staff supported forwarding the application to the Planning
20 Commission with a recommendation for approval.

21
22 Responding to questions from the Commission, Ms. Chan advised that while the proposed addition was
23 not significantly visible from offsite the residence was somewhat visible.
24

25 Bill Wood, project architect, was present at the meeting. Mr. Wood stated that they felt the October 2009
26 study session had provided helpful insights for the project. He advised that the property owners had
27 reviewed their proposal with the neighbors and received their support. Mr. Wood said that the property
28 owners purchased the house three years ago with its current colors, and were unaware of the originally
29 approved color palette. Mr. Wood commented that the original brown color stood out like a sore thumb in
30 the springtime on the hillside. He felt the current color palette was more amenable to the spring grasses,
31 and thought the proposal for a darker color on the lower level was a good idea to break up the two-story
32 effect of the house. He thought the darker colors would work well with the covered verandas that provide
33 shadow relief.
34

35 Mr. Wood appreciated staff's recommendations throughout the review process. Responding to staff's
36 recommendations, he offered the following comment:

- 37 ■ Agreed regarding the archway below the proposed deck
- 38 ■ Agreed to going back to the open handrails on the proposed deck
- 39 ■ Preferred to keep the existing deck as it exists
- 40 ■ Preferred a darker color as proposed on the lower level but would prefer not to have to paint the
41 whole house
- 42 ■ Agreed to the shielded light fixtures

43
44 With regard to the siting, Mr. Wood explained they have lowered the bedroom wing about a half level
45 down from the existing upper level of the house in order to tuck it into the hill. Next to it is a small patio
46 linking the downstairs gallery with the master bedroom. There is a bay window on the office as well as
47 windows surrounding three sides of the office. If the addition were moved closer, the office view would be
48 looking right into the eave line of the new roof and would render the patio area useless. Mr. Wood did not
49 think that the recommended shift would make a significant difference in the overall scheme.
50

51 Mr. Wood also explained the reason for wrapping the balcony around the perimeter of the house was two-
52 fold: (1) for the uniformity of design as you come up the driveway; and (2) the winds come from the west
53 and it provided a sheltered area.
54

55 Mr. Wood noted with regard to retaining the 7" oak that in 10-15 years this tree would grow to a size that
56 would impose on the roof and house itself. He thought it would be better to remove or transplant it. Their
57 arborist said the tree had a 50-50 chance of survival if transplanted.
58

1 Commissioner Hertel asked about the 8" oak in the middle of a proposed retaining wall, and whether the
2 wall location could be adjusted. He felt that tree provided more screening than some of the others
3 discussed. Mr. Wood thought the wall could be eliminated in its entirety by adding a curb wall at the patio
4 area.

5
6 Commissioner Hertel was supportive of staff's recommendation for an open railing, and wondered
7 whether the architect could modify the design to an 18" curb wall with an open railing to create a better
8 proportion on top of the archway. Mr. Wood was open to that recommendation, commenting that the 18"
9 wall was a good way to provide sufficient privacy and a nice scale.

10
11 Vice-Chair Ptaszynski asked about the balcony around the master bedroom that led fully around the
12 building element and went to nowhere. Mr. Wood stated that the French doors leading from the bedroom
13 out to the balcony go right out to stairs to the lower level. Their intent was for the area to left of the
14 balcony to provide a sitting area that was protected from the winds on the west side. He felt the design
15 also helped to break up the mass of the house.

16
17 The hearing was opened to public comment. Hearing none, Vice-Chair Ptaszynski closed the public
18 hearing and called for Commission comment and recommendation to the Planning Commission.

19
20 Commissioner Hertel could make the recommendation for approval. While he would like to see the 7" oak
21 preserved, he could accept the applicant's comments about it. Commissioner Hertel would like to see the
22 deck railing modified as discussed with the open railing above an 18" curb wall. Addressing staff's
23 recommendations, he was happy to leave the decks as proposed but preferred that all existing and new
24 deck details conform to each other. Commissioner Hertel agreed with the architect's comment that a
25 golden house color matched the hills for at least half of the year. Although he felt the current house color
26 was a bit too yellow, Commissioner Hertel thought the new understory color picked up the hill color much
27 better. He did not believe the house colors needed to go back to the originally approved palette but
28 thought the whole house could be painted in the proposed understory color. Commissioner Hertel noted
29 that with the new balcony area there were ample opportunities to use recessed lighting, which he felt was
30 worth considering. He did not find the recommendations to shorten the eastern portion or shift it closer
31 necessary.

32
33 Commissioner Marquand was similarly minded regarding the 7" oak tree, the railing detailing and detailing
34 the balconies' appearance. He commented that his view of the project had changed, seeing the addition
35 as a detached building with a connector. While not the best solution in every situation, he felt it worked in
36 this instance. He agreed with the architect that shifting it closer to the existing would not provide a
37 favorable result. Commissioner Marquand supported Commissioner Hertel's comments about the colors.

38
39 Planning Commission liaison Maggio recalled seeing the project in 2000 and felt the approved colors
40 were a knee-jerk reaction to the project's visibility. From a planning perspective, Commissioner Maggio
41 did not feel the addition would be too visible. She noted the architect had done a good job of bunkering
42 the addition into the hill. She recommended more research on the proposed colors, commenting that the
43 existing color was very yellow and agreeing that the originally approved color board was too dark.
44 Planning Commission liaison Maggio suggested the applicants spend a little more time in their color
45 consideration.

46
47 Vice-Chair Ptaszynski concurred with his fellow Commissioners, but questioned the master bedroom
48 balcony. While sympathetic to the wind concern, he found its design awkward. He suggested adding a
49 single utility door near and stair and moving the French doors to the seating area of the balcony. As
50 shown, he felt it would appear as a forgotten spot.

51
52 Commissioner Hertel moved to forward HDP27-09 to the Planning Commission as proposed, with the
53 following recommended modifications:

- 54 ■ Alter the deck railing from solid to open, with a lower curb wall of 18" at deck level to provide the
- 55 mass necessary to balance the appearance of the arcade
- 56 ■ Carry the same deck railing detail into the existing balcony for consistency
- 57 ■ Explore alternate more natural hillside colors for the whole house
- 58 ■ Submit lighting cutsheets for dark sky fixtures

- 1 ▪ Make the wraparound deck more usable and logical
- 2 ▪ Siting is acceptable
- 3 ▪ Consider altering the retaining wall to preserve the 8" oak on the downslope side of the hill

4
5 Ms. Chan advised that the application could be on the February 1, 2010 Planning Commission agenda.

6
7 Commissioner Marquand seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous consent. (3-0-0)

8
9 10. **OTHER BUSINESS:**

10
11 A. **MEETING DATES FOR 2010** Design Review Commission Meetings will be held on the
12 second and fourth Monday's of the month beginning January 2010. The meeting location will change to
13 the Lafayette Library & Learning Center at 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd. in the Library Arts & Sciences Discovery
14 Center.

15 Information item only.

16
17
18 11. **COMMISSIONERS' ACTIVITY REPORT**

19
20 Ms. Chan advised that election of new Chair and Vice-Chair for 2010 was deferred to the next
21 meeting.

22
23 12. **PLANNING MANAGER'S REPORT**

24
25 13. **ADJOURN:** The meeting concluded at 9:15 p.m. The next regularly scheduled meeting of the
26 Design Review Commission is Tuesday, January 25, 2010.

27
28 Respectfully submitted,

29
30
31 _____
32 Danielle Signorella
33