DEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW BOARD
MINUTES
January 14, 2016 at 8:30 A.M.
245 EAST BONITA AVENUE
CITY COUNCIL CONFERENCE ROOM, CITY HALL

PRESENT

Emmett Badar, Council Member
David Bratt, Planning Commission
Shari Garwick, Senior Engineer
Blaine Michaelis, City Manager
Larry Stevens, Assistant City Manager of Community Development

STAFF

Eric Beilstein, Building Superintendent
Marco Espinoza, Senior Planner
Luis Torrico, Associate Planner
Jennifer Williams, Associate Planner
Fabiola Wong, Planning Manager

ABSENT

Scott Dilley, Chamber of Commerce
John Sorcinelli, Public Member at Large

CALL TO ORDER

David Bratt called the regular meeting of the Development Plan Review Board to order at 8:34 a.m. so as to conduct regular business in the City Council Conference Room.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: Larry Stevens moved, seconded by Emmette Badar to approve the November 12, 2015 minutes. (Garwick & Michaelis abstain)

Larry Stevens moved, seconded by Emmette Badar to approve the October 22, 2015 minutes. (Bratt,Garwick & Michaelis abstain)

DPRB Case No. 15-17

A request to construct a 9,313 square foot two-story home with a 3,537 square foot basement and subterranean four-car garage at 1043 Via Romales.

Steve Eide, Architect, was present.
Rene Bobadilla, Resident from 1049 Via Romales, was present.

Associate Planner Luis Torrico stated the applicant is requesting approval to construct a 9,313 square foot two-story single family residence with a 3,537 square foot subterranean four-car garage located at 1043 Via Romales. The vacant property measures approximately 83,290 square foot in lot area and is located within Planning Area I of Specific Plan No. 12.

The Development Plan Review Board previously approved a similar design in 2007, however, the construction did not move forward. As required by Section 18.520.360, the request requires review and approval of a Precise Plan. In addition, Section 18.520.350 of SP 12 requires that before any grading is done within SP 12, the plans shall be reviewed by the Board and the Planning Commission; therefore, should the Board approve the request, it will be also require review by the Planning Commission.

The site is located within SP 12 which has a scenic easement area. The intent of the easement is to preserve the natural open space. Grading is permitted for slope stability within the scenic easement area. No development is proposed within the scenic easement area and limited grading is proposed to stabilize the proposed development area. The site is a flag-lot accessed via a 28 foot wide flag portion of the lot. The site slopes upward towards the rear of the site and development will be limited to the front middle portion of the site. There is an existing wrought iron fence around the perimeter of the property that will remain in place. No additional fencing is proposed at this time. Three Black Walnut trees are proposed to be removed as part of the development and will be discussed further in the report.

As previously mentioned, development will be limited to outside of the scenic easement area and will include retaining walls at the perimeter of the development area and on both sides of the flag portion of the lot. The proposed retaining walls will consist of decorative block or CMU block with a stucco finish and will range in height from one foot to 7'3" tall. Retaining walls at the front entry will be stepped to break up the overall height, which will include six and 7'3" high retaining walls. The 7'3" high retaining wall will be setback three and seven feet from the 6 foot high retaining wall to create the separation.

Section 15.520.200.A.1 of SP 12 requires that front setbacks for all residential developments in Planning Area 1 be determined by the Board, as topographic conditions vary in SP 12. The proposed front yard setback measures 25 feet to the main residential structure and 16 feet to the covered porch. The covered porch will only measure one-story in height and 25 feet wide, therefore only a small portion of the of the residential structure will be less than 25 feet from the property line.

A conceptual landscape plan has been submitted by the applicant, which will include six foot landscaped planters between the driveway and side property lines of the flag portion of the site. In addition, the rear yard will be landscaped to include a minimum of six canopy-type replacement trees as required by Tree Removal Permit 15-56. Should the project move forward, the applicant will be required to submit a complete landscape documentation package, which will include, but not limited to a planting plan, irrigation plan and water calculations to comply with the Water-Efficient Landscape Ordinance.

The two-story residence is designed in a Spanish Mediterranean architectural style and will include 1,525 square feet on the basement level, 4,780 square feet on the first floor and 3,008 square feet on the second floor for a total living area of 9,867 square feet. In addition, the house will include a 3,537 square foot subterranean four-car garage.

The residence has been designed in a manner to adequately address the overall massing of the structure and includes various planes to provide horizontal and vertical articulation. The main residence will be setback nine feet from the one-story covered entry porch, which further helps to provide articulation. In addition, the design includes multiple rooflines which add additional interest to the elevation. Lastly, the design includes decorative columns at the entry porch, door and window surrounds and decorative trim band to break up the first and second stories. Additional architecture features will include stucco exterior finishes, "S" curve roof tile, Coronado Brown Cobble field stone veneer, and decorative foam trim with plaster window and door surrounds.

The residence will measure two stories with a subterranean garage and basement level. The only visible portion of the basement level will be the garage door to provide access. An entry landing with decorative metal railing will step up nine feet from the finish grade and will wrap around the south side of the house, over the garage entry. The various materials and horizontal breaks will help to alleviate the overall massing of the structure and will be compatible with the existing homes in the neighborhood.

As part of the development, up to four Black Walnut trees may have to be removed. Grading will certainly impact two of the four trees and may potentially impact the third and fourth; therefore Staff is recommending that their removal be approved. If the third and fourth tree can be preserved, they will not be removed. As part of the removal, Staff recommends that the applicant plant canopy-type replacement trees a minimum of 15-gallon in size at a ratio of 2:1. Therefore up to eight replacement trees will be planted should all four trees be removed. The proposed landscape plan includes a total of nine 24" and 36" trees be planted throughout the site, eight of which will be considered replacement trees.

Staff recommends that the Development Plan Review Board recommend approval to the Planning Commission of Development Plan Review Board 15-17, Precise Plan 15-03 and Tree Removal Permit 15-56 subject to the attached conditions.

Mr. Michaelis asked from where the setback is being measured.

Associate Planner Torrico stated this is a flag lot and due to the topography, the Board is to decide the setback. As of right now the setback is being measured from the southwestern property line.

Mr. Stevens asked where the current setback is measured too.

Associate Planner Torrico stated the current setback is measured to the wall of the front porch.

Mr. Stevens asked about the wall of the front porch, the model does not show the step in the wall.

Associate Planner Torrico stated that after the model was submitted Staff asked the applicant to add a step to the porch wall structure. Staff felt that by adding a step in the wall the massing would seem less substantial.

Mr. Stevens asked the dimensions of the first and second steps in the wall.

Associate Planner Torrico stated the first wall is six feet tall, steps back two and half feet then the second wall is seven feet, three inches tall.

Mr. Stevens asked about the grading limits for this area; how much of this pad exists as a rough graded pad.

Associate Planner Torrico stated for the entire project there will be 4,000 cubic yards of cut and 410 cubic yards of fill.

Mr. Stevens pointed out that there looks to be a lot of cut.

Associate Planner Torrico stated the majority of the cut will be down the center of the site.

Mr. Stevens asked if there is to be cut at the front of the proposed home.

Associate Planner Torrico answered no, most of the fill will go at the front of the proposed home site.

Mr. Stevens asked if this was the same footprint that was proposed and approved by the Board in 2007. He also asked if the grading was the same.

Associate Planner Torrico stated that the project is the same except for the added living space in the subterranean area of the home.

Mr. Stevens asked if the entrance to the garage was a two-car garage door.

Associate Planner Torrico stated yes, the garage door is a two-car garage door but the garage will have four parking bays inside.

Mr. Stevens asked about the two homes adjacent to this property, if they were approved or built before or after the prior approval of this original home in 2007.

Associate Planner Torrico stated that the northern property was built in 1991 and the southern property was just recently built in the last couple of years.

Mr. Stevens asked if this project complies with the max height.

Associate Planner Torrico stated yes, this project does comply with the vertical heights of cut.

Mr. Stevens asked if the walls surrounding the driveway are due to grade.

Associate Planner Torrico answered correct, the walls are retaining and are about two feet in height.

Mr. Stevens noted that it appears that most of the area behind the house is fairly flat. His initial reaction is to turn the house 90 degrees.

Mr. Beilstein noted that if one were to look at the contours on the map, there is not a great deal of flat lot.

Senior Planner Espinoza pointed out that there is a slope; the property drops 30 feet from the north property line to the back of the home.

Mr. Beilstein asked if there has been a discussion with the applicant regarding on-site water storage. He noted that on-site water storage is a Public Works condition of approval.

Mr. Stevens asked if landscape requirements were discussed with the applicant.

Associate Planner Torrico stated that the new landscaping standards have yet to be discussed with the applicant in full.

Mr. Stevens asked if this is the area with the dissolved HOA.

Associate Planner Torrico stated that Mr. Stevens was correct; there is not a HOA approval required for this area.

Mr. Stevens asked if the "old plan" had a smaller garage.

Associate Planner Torrico stated the subterranean area of the home was smaller. The current plan added 1,500 square feet of living space adjacent to the garage area.

Mr. Bratt asked the applicant if he would like to address the Board.

Steve Eide, Architect stated that he followed the original footprint from 2007. The new property owners asked to expand the subterranean level to accommodate extra living space. In adding living space he was able to add bays in the garage for guest parking.

Senior Planner Espinoza asked the architect if he had done the previous design.

Steve Eide, Architect stated no, he was not the original architect.

Mr. Stevens asked if this is the same owner from 2007.

Steve Eide, Architect stated no, this is a new owner.

Mr. Stevens asked if the tree removals were also submitted in 2007.

Senior Planner Espinoza stated he believed the tree removals were submitted for the four Black Walnut trees. He noted just like in 2007, Staff would like to save tree number four.

Mr. Stevens stated these Black Walnut trees look to be planted along the scenic easement line. He believes that if the retaining walls are adjusted a bit, three of the four Black Walnut trees may be salvageable.

Mr. Beilstein stated the City has not previously dealt with a private underground garage. He asked how the ventilation would work in this case.

Steve Eide, Architect stated the system would be mechanical.

Mr. Beilstein asked where the mechanics of the system would be placed.

Steve Eide, Architect stated they are looking into placing the mechanics on the side of the property. Also, he mentioned grates could be placed inconspicuously at the front of the property.

Mr. Beilstein asked where guests are to park.

Steve Eide, Architect stated that guests can park in the garage.

Mr. Stevens noted the driveway is 250 feet long and would be established as a fire lane.

Mr. Beilstein asked if the applicant has had any discussions with Edison regarding a transformer for this size home.

Steve Eide, Architect stated no we have not.

Rene Bobadilla, Resident 1049 Via Romales stated the transformer for his home was installed with the purpose of being shared with the future home at 1043 Via Romales.

Mr. Bratt asked if there were any further questions for the architect, then asked if the neighbor would like to speak.

Rene Bobadilla, Resident 1049 Via Romales stated his name and that he was the resident to the south of this proposed new home. He had a couple concerns that he wanted the Board to take into consideration. He was concerned about the closeness of the new home to his property line; he felt the front porch was too close. His second and main concern was to make sure this property has proper drainage. In the last rains the homeowner had to place over 350 sandbags to keep water flowing in the correct direction off the hill.

Mr. Stevens asked how the vacant property currently drains.

Rene Bobadilla, Resident 1049 Via Romales stated that he split the drainage and had it go to each side of his property. He said his main problem was not so much water as it was the mud flowing off the hill.

Mr. Michaelis asked if the new NPDES regulations will be enforced for this property.

Ms. Garwick replied yes, NPDES guidelines will need to be followed. She added that due to the area, debris flow will also need to be taken into consideration.

Mr. Stevens reiterated that he is concerned about the height of the front wall and the proximity to the setback. He does appreciate the fact that the 13 foot wall was taken and split to incorporate a step in the wall.

Associate Planner Torrico stated that Staff can work with the applicant to push the home back a little.

Mr. Beilstein noted that if the home were moved back then the proposed backyard would be up against the scenic easement line.

Mr. Stevens stated he would like to explore options, even if it is to change the angle of the home. He believes a conceptual analysis would be satisfactory at this point in time. He would like to know if there would be an advantage to turning or pivoting the structure to get a better site plan. He added that the Board owes the neighbors some consideration when dealing with a home of this size and proportion. Lastly he asked Mr. Bobadilla if he was aware of this home design before he built his home.

Rene Bobadilla, Resident 1049 Via Romales stated no, he was not aware or he would have designed his home differently.

Motion: Larry Stevens moved, second by Blaine Michaelis to continue to a date uncertain. Applicant is to work with Planning Staff to explore options in regards to the placement of the home on the property in order to increase the front yard setback and find a way to preserve the Black Walnut trees. Conceptual analysis for additional home placement options will be reviewed by the Board at a date uncertain.

Motion carried 5-0-2 (Dilley & Sorcinelli absent)

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 9:24 a.m. to the meeting of January 28, 2016 at 8:30 a.m.

Chariman
San Dimas Development Plan Review Board

ATTEST:

Development Plan Review Board
Departmental Assistant

Approved: 2/25/2016