



Design Review Commission Meeting

Location: Novato City Hall, 901 Sherman Avenue

THE CITY OF
NOVATO
CALIFORNIA

September 19, 2018

MINUTES

922 Machin Ave
Novato, CA 94945
415/899-8900
FAX 415/899-8213
www.novato.org

Mayor
Josh Fryday
Mayor Pro Tem
Pam Drew
Councilmembers
Denise Athas
Pat Eklund
Eric Lucan

City Manager
Regan M. Candelario

Present: Patrick MacLeamy, Chair
Michael Barber
Joe Farrell

Absent: Beth Radovanovich

Staff: Hans Grunt, Senior Planner

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL:

The meeting was called to order (at 7:35pm)

APPROVAL OF FINAL AGENDA:

M/s: Farrell/Barber 3-0-1 (Radovanovich absent) to approve.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

CONSENT CALENDAR:

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 5, 2018
(MBar,JF,PM,BR)

M/s: Farrell/Barber 3-0-1 (Radovanovich absent) to approve.

PUBLIC HEARING:

CONTINUED ITEMS: None

NEW ITEMS: None

PROJECT DESIGN WORKSHOP:

1. LANDING COURTHOMES P2018 -038: DESIGN REVIEW CEQA- TENTATIVELY NO FURTHER REVIEW – SECTION 15162 APN 153-162-70; NO ADDRESS ASSIGNED

Conduct a public workshop to review and provide comments on a conceptual site plan and architecture for 32, three story, attached, for-sale homes on a 1.97 acre paved site currently used for RV and boat storage on the easterly side of Landing Court opposite a Public Storage facility. Three home types are proposed ranging in size from 1,765sf to 2,274sf. Each home includes a one or two car garage; 27 surface parking spaces are also proposed for a total of 84 on-site spaces.

Senior Planner Hans Grunt presented staff's report to the Commission, including an overview of the proposal, the site's development proposal history from 2015, design features of the conceptual proposal, a summary of the July 31, 2018 neighborhood workshop, and described the subsequent entitlement process.

Applicant Karen Martin of Pacific Planning Group presented there conceptual proposal and acknowledged concerns raised by neighboring residents at the July 31, 2018 neighborhood meeting and how they intend to address those concerns, including stepping back the third story of perimeter units to reduce massing; use of transom windows or limiting windows to minimize privacy impacts; construction of a masonry perimeter wall to maintain security, privacy and reduce noise impacts; protection of a heritage size oak tree proximal to the northwest boundary of the site; use of individual refuse cans, and drainage improvements.

Architect, Eric Mikiten, described the individual unit floor plans in detail, including accessibility opportunities in the design e.g. elevator shaft in-lieu of lower/upper story stacked closet space.

Public Comments (summary)

Ben Oyl thinks it is a good design effort for the neighborhood; thinks building 6 is too close to the northerly property line; perimeter parking proximal to the northeast corner of the site should be moved or eliminated to avoid noise impacts; questioned need for excess parking.

John Christopher concerned about height and length of building 6; perimeter landscaping needs to be well designed to actually perform well; perimeter parking along north boundary is a concern (noise, car lights); again expressed main concern is with mass, height and length of building 6; appreciates the developer's record of outreach to the neighborhood for feedback.

Emily Larsen appreciates the developer's record of outreach to the neighborhood to hear concerns and desires; agrees building 6 could be "broken up" to reduce mass and create a view-shed from/to Clausing Ave.; prefers individual trash cans; supports eliminating perimeter parking along northerly and easterly property lines; questions adequacy of a one car garage for three bedroom units; an examination of ways to improve pedestrian access to and along (north) Redwood Blvd. should be addressed; would like graphics e.g. cross section drawings to depict massing, height and spatial separation of the project buildings from existing, surrounding development to "tell" a more complete design story.

Joe Dorsey concerned with height noting that nothing around is this high and primarily single story; building 6 will be a wall when viewed from Clausing Ave.

LaDonna Dorsey concerned with building height; agrees parking along north and east perimeters should be eliminated.

Commission Comments

Commissioner MacLeamy noted the allowed height limit is 35'. Informed the public that this is a workshop and there will be more opportunity for input in the design process.

Commissioner Barber feels the site design should obey setbacks along the frontage with Landing Ct. given more industrial uses opposite on the street; perimeter landscaping is needed - currently not enough planter area depicted on perimeter; concerned with "look" of masonry wall – needs to be residential in character/materials; agrees with individual trash cans – Architect indicated planned room for cans in each garage; scale and perceived mass of the buildings needs to be "tackled" more aggressively; questioned 12/12 roof pitch depicted in design examples - would be too tall unless dormers of third level integrated.

Commissioner Farrell agrees building 6 needs to be broken up to convey more open view shed with Clausing Ave. and avoid monotony; need to convey adequacy of landscaping area and plantings, allowing for trees too, along the perimeter property lines; supports relocating or removing perimeter parking along north and easterly property lines; consider employing dormer design for third level thus bringing the exterior wall heights down.

Commissioner MacLeamy suggest precast wall along north and easterly perimeter – attractive designs available – referenced the precast walls along Ignacio Blvd. as a good example; a minimum 5' planer along base of wall is preferred; one entry to site is "working too hard" suggest a 2nd entry to the east; units facing Landing Ct. should gain access from it allowing elimination of the interior lane that bisects the site; units in the center of the site (bldgs. 4 &5) should be "shifted" and integrated into a ring of units around the balance of the site accessed by the perimeter lane thus resulting in a single, large center green that virtually all of the units could back onto e.g. living/family room opens up to; agrees with pursuing a third level dormer design into the roof system to create a "2.5 story look".

GENERAL BUSINESS: None

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 8:45pm