



Design Review Commission Meeting

Location: Novato City Hall, 901 Sherman Avenue

THE CITY OF
NOVATO
CALIFORNIA

August 1, 2018

MINUTES

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

City Manager
Regan M. Candelario

Present: Michael Barber
Joe Farrell
Beth Radovanovich

Absent: Patrick MacLeamy, Chair
Marshall Balfe

Staff: Hans Grunt, Senior Planner
Brett Walker, Senior Planner

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL:

The meeting was called to order at 7:34 p.m.

APPROVAL OF FINAL AGENDA:

M/s: Radovanovich/Farrell to approve: Passed (3-0-2)

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

CONSENT CALENDAR:

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MAY 2, 2018 (MBar,JF, PM,MBal)

Due to lack of quorum from May 2, 2018 hearing, draft minutes continued to next hearing for approval.

PUBLIC HEARING:

CONTINUED ITEMS: None

NEW ITEMS: None

PROJECT DESIGN WORKSHOP:

**2. THE PAVILIONS
DESIGN REVIEW WORKSHOP; FILE: P2018-018;
APN 153-170-56; 200 LANDING COURT**

Conduct a public workshop to review and provide comments regarding conceptual site design, building design, landscaping, site planning and development, circulation, and building massing for a 26 unit live/work development.

Brett Walker, Senior Planner, presented the staff report and introduced the project, including the project description, location, and site characteristics.

Commissioner Joe Farrell asked Walker about the Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of the project and whether it meets the reduced Hillside FAR. Walker responded that the project as currently proposed is approximately 1,200 square feet over the FAR limit.

Commissioner Michael Barber asked Walker a question regarding the proposed building height and whether the optional loft shown on one of the floor plans was included in the FAR, and whether the work portion was equal to a minimum of 30 percent. Walker responded to Barber.

Commissioner Barber opened the public hearing and invited the applicant to present the project.

Geoff Wood, applicant, introduced the project and briefly described the concept of the product type, the benefits of reduced a commute with live/work concept, and introduced the architect, Chris Craiker. Craiker described the project, including a history of past approvals, the site plan presented at the neighborhood meeting, and the most recent revisions that reflect comments and recommendations of attendees at the neighborhood meeting.

Commissioner Farrell asked Craiker if they are proposing individual lots for the home sites, and how tall are the proposed retaining walls. Craiker responded that individual lots are proposed and retaining wall heights are six to eight feet. Craiker described some of the other components of the site plan.

Commissioner Barber asked questions regarding parking, outdoor space, and employees at the site.

Commissioner Barber asked individuals that wanted to speak to fill out a speaker card and called on the first public commenter.

Ben Oyle stated that he is concerned the process is moving too fast and stated that impacts to the family neighborhood needs to be considered. He questioned the need for live/work and questioned the support to amend the master plan to allow live/work.

Joe Dorsey stated that developing on a hill is problematic and that there are a lot of retaining walls proposed. The project is fighting the hillside and that he liked the prior approval.

Emily Larsen stated that the work space areas do not have closets or storage, stated that the business center should act as a community center because the proposed three bedroom units will likely include children living in the neighborhood. There should be a landscaping buffer between the site and Hwy 101; that views of the round house should be considered, and that the Landing Court cul-de-sac bulb width should be reduced. Parking on Landing Court and the cul-de-sac is a concern.

Diane Vitalich stated that the land is zoned commercial and that residential does not fit. She stated that she lives at the top of the hill and is worried about drainage. She stated that in a commercial building, domestic animals will not be present.

Klaus Larsen stated his concerns about employees parking at the site and fire access.

Michael Lynch asked if everything about the project is finalized and asked how the project benefits us in the neighborhood.

Commissioner Ferrell stated that the grading is brutal and that there are six and eight-foot cut walls. He stated that the upper portion of the site is too dense and that duplexes may be better suited. He stated that parking may be better placed under the units instead of above. He stated that he doesn't think the business center will be utilized. He stated the applicant should meet with the fire department regarding turn radii and access. He stated he is not fond of the units.

Commissioner Radovanovich stated that a lot of cut was used on the previous approval to set the buildings into the hillside and appreciated the previous approval. She stated her concern with fire defense and fire access at the site. She stated that FAR is high and that it may be too dense. She stated that the applicant has some valid ideas and there are opportunities for development at the site.

Commissioner Barber agreed that fire needs to be looked at and stated that the project needs good extensive landscaping, the freeway interaction and massing is important, and that landscaping between the upper and lower units is necessary. He is concerned about ridgeline silhouetting and that the FAR discrepancy needs to be addressed. ADA needs to be addressed. He stated that the retaining walls are too tall and that he would like to see the material choice for the retaining walls. He stated that parking needs refinement and that open space for the individual units needs to be addressed. A three bedroom unit needs more outdoor space. He stated that he is fine with the modern architecture but would like to see variety between the attached and detached units to differentiate the two products. He stated that he is concerned with the homes on the ridge. The number of tall retaining walls is an indication that the design may not be appropriate for the site. He questioned the types of allowable uses for the work portion of the live/work units and that compatibility needs to be analyzed. He also questioned what components of the project will make it net zero.

Craiker stated that they intend to have very efficient units with rooftop solar.

Commissioner Radovanovich stated that FAR at the site is very high.

GENERAL BUSINESS: None

ADJOURNMENT: M/s: Radovanovich/Farrell to adjourned at 8:50 p.m.: Passed (3-0-2)