

DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

RECORD OF ACTIONS

May 14, 2009

A. Call to Order 9:00 a.m.

Board members present: David Brown, Sandy Diefenbach, Merle Watson, Rob James and Cathrine Laguna.

Board members absent: Carol Bell, Karl Ulle

Staff present: Rozanne Cherry

B. Record of Actions from the April 23, 2009 meeting:

MOTION: Moved by M. Watson, seconded by S. Diefenbach, to approve the minutes.

MOTION CARRIED: 5-0-0

C. Oral and Written Communications: Staff noted the Downtown Business Association comments were handed out for item E.1

D. Consent Calendar: None

E. Individual Case Review:

1. SUB 09-004 Revised Design for the Paramount Condominium Project, 511 N. Escondido Blvd, in the Centre City Urban District of the Downtown Specific Plan.

Applicant: Mr. Peter D. Zak, Lyon Realty, 4901 Birch Street Newport Beach, CA 92660

Planner: Bill Martin

Staff indicated the previous project by D.R. Horton received approval at the end of 2008 and has now been sold to Lyon Homes. Staff described the background and the revisions to the previously approved Paramount project, which included only one dead-end alley, more through circulation than the previous project, increasing the number of units from 96 (3-story) to 112 (3-story) units with the existing 4-unit orphan building to remain. Staff indicated the project entailed two basic building types, a traditional townhome style with a two car garages and another building type with offset garages tucked under with open tandem parking. Staff also indicted the buildings would be setback 3'6" to 4'6". Staff had concerns with the streetscape along North Escondido Boulevard and recommended additional details be added to the individual entries such as garden walls, step-up stoops and deeper recessed entries.

Staff described building "A" where the buildings were orientated to face North Escondido Boulevard. Staff felt more continuity should be provided between the new building and the existing orphan building. Staff indicated the revised design included removing the existing tower element and deco details on the orphan building. Staff recommended retaining the details on the 4-unit orphan building, enhancing the entries, providing a deeper recess, raising the stoops, adding rounded arch elements to the base of the building similar to the orphan building.

Staff also felt additional enhancements be provided by expanding the use of darker colors on the base of the building, adding varied parapet heights, adding detail of the equipment screens, adding metal features along the balconies and enhancing the window surroundings around the vinyl windows. Staff also recommended the exterior roof ladders to be covered, internalized or to be provided on the balconies.

Staff described the revised building floor plans for the units which included the living area on the 2nd and 3rd floors and smaller 2 and 3 bedrooms units ranging in size from 1,000 to 1,400 SF (previous approved at 1,800 – 2,200 SF). Staff also described building “D” where the rear of the buildings (South & North elevation) would be visible from Center City Parkway, with a single parapet height across the entire length, garage doors offset and wooden timber trellis. Staff had concerns with the balconies being left off of the rear of the perimeter buildings, not enough wall plain variation (less than 4” with vertical elements popping out approximately 18”), long plain walls without breaks and heavy looking balconies on the interior units. Staff recommended the same enhancements for building “D” as for Building “A”.

Staff also described the landscaping plan which provided limited opportunity for landscaping within the alleys. Staff recommended changing the canary island pine tress along Escondido Boulevard to a more appropriate street tree. Staff also indicated the recreation area for the entire project would only include a pool with a restroom building.

Mr. David Coe the architect for the project described his architectural background and indicated his experience with historic architecture and combining modern materials with construction techniques. He indicted the revised design was inspired by Irving Gill’s techniques of using tilt-up concrete. He noted the revised design avoided foam detailing since the quality of foam material does not last and instead preferred classic colors and details. He indicated arched doors were not durable due to the problems with the weight of the doors and fewer hinges, and would look at alternative designs for the exterior roof ladders. He also felt metal eyebrows were out of fashion and enclosed balcony walls would help screen items on the balcony and prevent residents from hanging things off the railings.

Mrs. Beard a citizen of Escondido felt the revised design looked like a “public housing project”. She clarified the saw-tooth detail only occurred on the side facing North Escondido Boulevard and felt the other buildings looked like long blocks of units. She also felt the multi-level town homes were not appropriate for seniors and others who want to live in close proximity to downtown and that the revised design provided limited grass areas and landscaping for children to play. She suggested using other methods of detailing without using foam.

Board member James had a concern with minimal exterior amenities, insufficient guest parking areas, unusable entries facing North Escondido Boulevard since residents would typically enter through the garages, lack of articulation and transition from the street up and too many units with small floor plans. He agreed with the design concept of not using foam but suggested the need to provide more enhancements. He indicated vinyl windows were only in a lighter tan color and not a darker brown color as shown on the exhibits. He recommended some massing and offsets of blocks be added. Board member Laguna felt the revised project looked too blocky and flat along the rear elevation, exterior ladders should not be exposed and that there were too much pavement and not enough green space. She also felt the number of units should be reduced. Board member Watson felt the project was too dense, did not have enough guest parking and insufficient amenities. He also felt the current conditions of the site were deplorable with fences leaning and mesh screening torn. He suggested removing the existing chain-link fence around the orphan building, provide storm-water control elements behind the fence and add language in the management/CCR’s to control the items residents store on the balconies. Chairman Brown had a concern with the look of the buildings being very stark and

bleak in the future. He suggested reducing the number of units, providing additional green space areas, eliminating the exterior ladders and providing architectural interest on all four sides of the buildings. He also felt the view of the buildings from Center City Parkway was unacceptable. Board member James felt the orphan building should not dictate the project design and that the 4' deep balconies do not provide enough useable space. He suggested providing wider balconies to accommodate tables and chairs. Board member Laguna preferred retaining the orphan building as evidence of the history of the project.

MOTION: Moved by M. Watson, seconded by C. Laguna, to redesign and resubmit the project.

MOTION CARRIED: 5-0-0

2. 2001-30-PPL, New Kitchen Addition and Exterior Colors added to an Historic Residence, in the Old Escondido Neighborhood, 429 E. 8th Avenue, Zoned R-1-6

Applicant: Federico Sanchez, 429 E. 5th Avenue, Escondido, CA 92025

Planner: Darren Parker

Staff described the project which included legalizing a 256 SF kitchen addition, a new gable across the front, exterior colors and block pilasters with wrought iron in between along the frontage of the property. Staff recommended the plans be re-drawn to scale, the exterior color changed back to the original color or a period appropriate color, a period appropriate boxed-in porch cover with enlarged posts and a low wall or railing around the porch be added, the block columns with wrought iron be removed, the height of the wall within the front yard setback be lowered, a permit from engineering for the curb cut widening be obtained and the front door be replaced with a period appropriate style. Staff informed the board that the applicant had agreed to re-paint the residence back to the original gray color.

Board member Laguna felt the un-permitted structure which included enclosing the porch and changing the roof line ruined the front appearance of the residence. She recommended the addition be removed and rebuilt back to its original condition. She also felt the exterior color and wall/fence were not appropriate. Board member Watson felt the large gable roof was not appropriate. Board member James felt the residence should be brought back to its original condition.

MOTION: Moved by R. James, seconded by C. Laguna, to reject the entire proposal and to return the structure to the way it appeared in 2004.

MOTION CARRIED: 5-0-0

F. Current Business: None

G. Oral Communications: Staff informed the board that Mr. Cueva the owner of the historic buildings relocated to 7th Avenue would welcome the board to come by anytime and see the project. The Board requested Staff to arrange a field trip after one of the Boards meetings. .

H. Board Member Discussion:

Board member Watson asked whether the large sheet metal hood on the equipment building for the Police and Fire Administration building would to be painted.

I. Adjournment at 10:30 a.m. to the next regularly scheduled Design Review Board meeting on Thursday, May 29, 2009 at 9:00 a.m. in Training Room #1 at City Hall, 201 North Broadway.

David Brown, Chairman
of the Design Review Board

Rozanne Cherry, Secretary
of the Design Review Board