

LARKSPUR PLANNING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF JULY 10, 2018

The Larkspur Planning Commission was convened at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers by Chair Deignan.

Commissioners Present: Chair Monte Deignan, Laura Tauber, Ignatius Tsang,  
Todd Ziesing

Commissioners Absent: Daniel Kunstler

Staff Present: Planning Director Neal Toft

### OPEN TIME FOR PUBLIC EXPRESSION

There were no comments.

### PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- The Commission may be aware that there is a lot of road construction going on around the city, particularly in the Palm Hill and Madrone Avenue area.
- Work on the Bon Air Bridge has started and there will be continuous maneuvering of lanes as the approach is fixed along with testing and adjusting of the traffic signaling. People should expect delays.
- PG&E has been replacing gas pipes and sanitary/sewer repair work is also being done.
- The active time to do street resurfacing is the summer while the roads are dry. Work by utility companies will be done in advance of the paving.
- Property owners should be getting notice well in advance of any of this construction work. Chair Deignan stated that has not been the case in his neighborhood.
- Associate Planner Anna Camaraota will be leaving her position with the City in early August. The Commissioners may want to wish her the best of luck in future endeavors.

### CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS

1. **DR/FAR #18-13: 74 Meadowood Avenue (APN: 022-262-22); Couture Architecture, applicant; Sven Junkergrad and Nicole Douglas, property owners; R-1 (Single Family Residential) Zoning District. Applicants are proposing 143 square feet of additions to an existing single-family residence, including an approximately 18-foot high, two-story addition near the southwest corner of the building and expansion into a portion of existing crawl space beneath the garage, and replacement of exterior building finishes. In addition, the application includes demolition of an existing pool and surrounding wooden deck and replacement with a terraced lawn area with steps leading to the rear property line abutting Heatherwood Park to the east. As proposed, the project is subject to the following permit approvals: 1) Design Review; and 2) Floor Area Ratio (FAR) Exception to allow an increase in the floor area ratio from 0.37 to 0.39 FAR, where 0.32 FAR is the maximum permitted due to the average slope of the property. CEQA Status: Categorically Exempt pursuant to Section 15301 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines; minor alterations to existing structures.  
Recommendation: Approve subject to findings and conditions provided in report.**

Chair Deignan asked if anyone would like to pull this item from the Consent Calendar. There was no response.

On the Consent Calendar, M/s, Ziesing/Tauber, motioned and the Commission voted 4-0-1 (Kunstler absent) to approve DR FAR #18-13, 74 Meadowood Avenue, subject to the findings and conditions set forth in the staff report.

Chair Deignan stated there was a 10-day appeal period.

## **BUSINESS ITEMS**

### 1. Discussion of Power Point Presentation Policies

Planning Director Toft presented the staff report. He noted applicants often ask to make a PowerPoint presentation but staff tends to discourage this practice, except for more significant projects. It is important for staff to review all materials ahead of time. He polled other jurisdictions and found that most were fairly receptive to the use of these types of presentations. He noted PowerPoint presentations can take more time. For minor project, most applicants present a packet of detailed plans, maps, explanations, etc. He asked the Commission for comments.

Chair Deignan stated the use of PowerPoint presentations could be superfluous for some projects and make sense for others.

Commissioner Tauber agreed with Chair Deignan- she would leave it to the discretion of the Planning Director and staff. She would support the use of these presentations for projects that are complex and need additional explanation. It would also be helpful to have the policy written in the principles that are given to the applicants.

Commissioner Ziesing stated he was a fan of digital presentations. He would like to see all the information in digital form. The benefit is that it helps the applicant succinctly present the project and it could also be posted on the City Website in advance. The right way to handle this would be to have the Planning Department create an outline of what is in the presentation thereby giving the applicants a format within which to work. He noted the use of these presentations could lengthen the meeting times unnecessarily. It could also create an opportunity to present an inaccurate representation of the project. He likes the idea of a policy but thought they should take another look at it in a year or two.

Commissioner Tsang stated he grew up with PowerPoint presentations and felt they are sometimes used "ad nauseum". Drawings, plans, sections, and elevations communicate what the applicant is trying to accomplish- not words. He is not a fan of PowerPoint and he was opposed to slick presentations and people trying to do a "sales pitch".

Chair Deignan stated he was in favor of this type of presentation if it can better explain the application. However, a 15-minute presentation might be too long. He liked the idea of digital information being posted to the Website so people could review it ahead of time. He liked the idea of implementing the policy and reviewing it after one year.

Planning Director Toft stated he was hearing from the Commission that staff should not be encouraging applicants to use PowerPoint presentations unless absolutely necessary. They are sometimes necessary to convey the "bigger picture". It also depends on the complexity of the project. He suggested a time limit of 10 minutes for presentations. Chair Deignan stated that was a reasonable guideline. Commissioner Ziesing stated the rule of thumb was one to two minutes per slide.

Commissioner Tsang stated staff should encourage the use of cad drawings and 3-D modeling so the Commission could really understand the project- the site, the buildings, etc. Commissioner

Tauber agreed and stated the 3-D drawings should be displayed within the context of the surroundings.

Commissioner Ziesing noted PowerPoint technology was being replaced with better digital presentation products. He agreed the 3-D renderings were very informational.

Chair Deignan stated the use of 3-D technology should not be required- there were some "old school" architects still in practice.

Commissioner Ziesing stated the future is on-line, virtual meetings and the use of digital technology compliments this.

Chair Deignan discussed the Larkspur Planning Commissions Principles of Operations and talked about the need to delineate the findings.

Commissioner Ziesing agreed and stated Commissioners should avoid the appearance that they have a preference for a design or approach.

Commissioner Tsang stated he likes to find out the intent of the applicant/architect.

Planning Director Toft re-iterated that questioning design and details can help determine the feasibility of the project, but decisions must be based within the confines of the code and the findings.

Chair Deignan stated it was a good idea to flesh out as many details as possible.

M/s, Tauber/Tsang, motioned and the Commission voted 4-0-1 (Kunstler absent) to approve the amended Principles of Operations for the Larkspur Planning Commission changing the recommended limitation for a digital presentation from fifteen minutes to ten minutes.

## 2. Commissioners' Reports

There were no reports.

## 3. Approval of minutes of Planning Commission meeting on June 26, 2018

Chair Deignan stated the approval of the June 26, 2018 minutes would be continued to the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Toni DeFrancis,  
Recording Secretary

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing minutes were duly and regularly adopted at a regular meeting of the Larkspur Planning Commission on July 24, 2018.



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Neal Toft, Planning Director