

LARKSPUR PLANNING COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES OF JUNE 28, 2016

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

Commissioners Present: Acting Chair Daniel Kunstler, Monte Deignan,  
Mark Sandoval, Todd Ziesing

Commissioners Absent: Chair Laura Tauber

Staff Present: Planning Director Neal Toft  
Assistant Planner Nicholas Armour

### OPEN TIME FOR PUBLIC EXPRESSION

There were no comments.

### PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- Ms. Brenda Brown began working last week as the Interim Library Director and will be helping staff with the transition to a new director. Staff has started recruitment for a new director.
- There was a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for the opening of the Lark Creek Shops. The newly renovated shops are almost fully occupied. The former Yankee Pier location is still vacant.
- The project at 285 Magnolia is proceeding well and the applicants are discussing some alternative awning colors with staff.
- Striping work continues along North Magnolia Avenue. There have been concerns expressed by residents about the reduction from two lanes to one lane. This reduction in paving surface was implemented as a part of the mitigation for the Bon Air Bridge. It is also a measure to help reduce traffic and pedestrian conflicts at the crosswalks.
- Staff will be bringing a Junior Second Unit Ordinance to the Commission at the second meeting in July. The discussion will include issues related to parking, utilities for these types of units, etc.
- The City of Larkspur has been approached about filming for a Netflix series. Staff is looking to adopt a procedure and permitting process for filming activities.

### PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS

1. **DR/SUPV/FHE #15-56; 56 Bayview Avenue (AP #021-235-27); Polsky Perlstein Architects, applicants; Ryan Edwards and Carly Jefferson-Dow, property owners; R-1 (First Residential) Zoning District. Request for approval of the following permits to allow proposed demolition of an existing detached garage, first and second story renovations and additions to an existing 1,589 square foot single family residence, resulting in a 2,589 square foot residence on a 10,556 square foot property: 1) Design Review; 2) Slope Use Permit to allow 365 cubic yards of cut and 55 cubic yards of fill; 3) Variance to allow an existing pool to remain in the street side yard setback; and 4) Fence Height Exception to allow reconstruction of a fence exceeding 6 feet in height in the public Right of Way.**

Assistant Planner Armour presented a staff report.

Acting Chair Kunstler opened the Public Hearing.

Ms. Jessica Smith, representing Polsky Architects, made the following comments:

- The house has not been updated in 40 years. They want to give it a makeover.

- They are adding a subterranean garage and driveway to eliminate the existing steep and dangerous driveway.
- They are cleaning up the pool area and the falling down retaining walls.
- The proposed fence sounds really tall at 10 feet but the grade is sloping so much- pedestrians will not experience it as ten feet.
- They are proposing a level pool deck to allow the appropriate amount of privacy for both pool users and pedestrians on the street.
- The addition tries to celebrate the existing very traditional house.
- They plan to continue the colors and the architectural elements.
- The proposed landscaping will improve the curb appeal.

Acting Chair Kunstler asked if there were any ramifications on the design of the project due to the soils report. Ms. Smith stated the plan includes strong retaining walls underneath the house. The underground garage comes up right against the existing house foundation and there will be a lot of structural work to compensate for that. They pulled the rear of the garage closer to the street so the work would not be so extensive. Acting Chair Kunstler asked if there were any unusual drainage features related to the garage (post-excavation). Ms. Smith stated “no”- they worked with a civil engineer and there is a lot of bedrock in the area. There will be some retaining wall drainage around the bottom.

Commissioner Sandoval noted this was a constrained lot and they need to shore up the structure to do the retaining walls. He asked about staging operations and the sequencing of construction. He also asked about the delivery of materials and storing them on-site.

Mr. Jim Dow, contractor, made the following comments:

- This is a luxurious site compared to what he is used to seeing.
- They understand the impact of hauling materials out, doing the demolition, etc.
- They are used to communicating with the neighbors during construction.
- It is a logistic problem that they will have to deal with on a daily basis.
- They have not written up a plan but the garage demo will be put in a dumpster and hauled out.
- The construction vehicles will park off-site- perhaps in the parking lot across from the park.
- He pointed to the staging area on the plans.

Mr. Carly Dow, owner, made the following comments:

- This is a school route to Neil Cummins and they get a regular stream of cars starting at 8:00 a.m.
- They are aware of the issues.
- They are happy to make this as pain-free as possible.

Acting Chair Kunstler closed the Public Hearing.

Commissioner Sandoval provided the following comments:

- He is comfortable with the way the plan is re-inventing the site.
- The plan is imaginative.
- He could make the findings.

Commissioner Ziesing provided the following comments:

- The staff report is right on the money.
- The design is great.
- This is a wonderful use of the lot and optimizing the amount of livable space.
- He likes the way the plan creates a lot of outdoor space while not infringing on the neighbors.
- He is not concerned about the amount of cut and fill.
- This will be a very nice residence and will look like it has been there for a long time.

- He can make all the findings.

Commissioner Deignan provided the following comments:

- He agreed with the comments made by the other Commissioners.
- This is a sensitive design that maintains the character without overbuilding the lot.
- This is a reasonable application.
- It makes sense to dig the garage down and he was not concerned with the amount of off-haul.
- He could approve the Variance for the pool- it is existing, non-conforming.
- He could approve the Fence Height Exception.
- He referred to the Construction Management Plan and asked that special attention be paid to parking on the street or the idea of a dumpster being on the street for an extended amount of time- this is near the corner of Alexander and Bayview and is a blind intersection.
- He could support the project.

Acting Chair Kunstler provided the following comments:

- He agreed with the comments made by the other Commissioners.
- The design is appropriate for the site. It respects the scale of the neighborhood and the community at large.
- The number that “pops out” is the amount of cut but he is satisfied that the design justifies this number.
- The pool is a pre-existing, “grandfathered” condition.
- The Fence Height Exception is appropriate given the placement of the pool.

M/s, Deignan/Ziesing motioned and the Commission voted 4-0-1 (Chair Tauber absent) to approve DR/SUP/V/FHE #15-56, 56 Bayview Avenue, based on the findings and conditions set forth in the staff report and the comments made by the Commission.

Acting Chair Kunstler stated there was 10-day appeal period.

## **BUSINESS ITEM**

### 1. Commissioners Reports

There were no reports.

### 2. Approval of minutes of Planning Commission meeting on June 14, 2016

M/s, Deignan/Sandoval motioned and the Commission voted 3-0-2 (Chair Tauber absent, Ziesing abstained) to approve the June 14, 2016 minutes as submitted.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 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 26, 2016.



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Neal Toft, Planning Director