

**MEETING MINUTES OF THE
HERITAGE PRESERVATION BOARD
May 27, 2021**

ROLL CALL

Vice Chair Culhane called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Present: Board Members: Richard Storek, Lelia Lanctot, Sonia Gallant, Vice Chair Culhane

Absent: Board Member(s): Chair Hobbel

Staff: Kristin Teiche, Senior Planner/Recording Secretary

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

PLANNING STAFF'S ORAL REPORT

PUBLIC HEARING ITEM

1. **H/DR/FAR/ 21-18; 68 Madrone Avenue, (APN: 021-085-15); Polsky Perlstein Architects, Applicant; Ari and Mead Blum, Owners; R-1 (First Residential) Zoning District.** Applicant is requesting the following permits to allow new ground floor and second floor additions totaling 527 square feet to the rear and easterly side an historic single-family dwelling listed on Larkspur's Inventory of Historic Resources: 1) Heritage Review; 2) Design Review; 3) Floor Area Ratio Exception to allow increase the existing 1,907 square foot home with a .41 FAR to 2,434 square feet and a .52 FAR, where 1,544 square feet and a .33 FAR is permitted due to the slope of the lot. *CEQA Status: This project has been found to generally comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitation of Historic Structures and, therefore, has been determined to be exempt from environmental review under Categorical Exemption 15331, Class 31 of the CEQA Guidelines.*

Vice Chair Culhane opened the public hearing on this item and staff Planner Teiche provided the report.

Chair Culhane requested the project architect Jaren Polsky provide their presentation. Mr. Polsky requested staff display sheet A4.1 which compares the three dormer options they have designed for the home. Mr. Polsky presented the following points:

- He noted that he supports preservation of historic architecture but that these homes need to be updated for a modern standard of living.
- He is surprised that the original dormer design was considered too visible and in response has amended the plan to include dormer option NO. 1.

- He and the property owner prefer dormer options No. 2 or 3 as they believe the design will only be minimally visible, will look better, and will provide for a better bedroom for their children.
- He does not believe that dormer options 2 and 3 will unduly disturb the historic appearance of the home.
- They can live with option 1 but prefer options 2 and 3.

Ari Blum, property owner of 68 Madrone Ave. presented the following points:

- They purchased the home in 2008, when oldest son was 18 months.
- They purchased house because of its location and the historic architecture. It is important to them to maintain the historic character.
- Additions are at the rear where they are not visible from the roadway, and the side dormer addition is barely visible.
- Neighbors have expressed support for design.
- They prefer Dormer options 2 and 3 as it provides for a larger bedroom for their son.

Vice Chair Culhane asked about the story poles and whether they reflect option No. 1. Mr. Blum confirmed that was the case.

Commissioner Lanctot asked if there was a height difference between the three dormer options.

Jared Polsky stated that Options 2 and 3 were not higher. Option 1 proposes a second dormer that is recessed behind the existing historic dormer. The eastern face of dormers 2 and 3 were in line with the existing historic dormer. He believed options 2 and 3 were a cleaner simpler expression but noted that all three will work.

Vice Chair Culhane asked if the adjacent property owner has supported the proposed design. It was noted that the neighbor has supported this design in writing in a late mail submittal. Ari Blum, property owner also noted there re is a second letter of support which will be provided to staff.

Commissioner Storek asked staff if there were any neighbors who objected and staff Planner Teiche indicated there were not.

Commissioner Storek thanked the architect for complying with the historic architects direction but noted that he believed dormer option 3 to be cleaner. Likes the idea of unifying the dormers into one. He did acknowledge he is unclear on the value of the 4 square architecture.

Vice Chair Culhane agreed that option 3 is best for functionality and noted it would be difficult to see from the street.

Commissioner Lanctot also agreed and noted it would difficult to see the change. She also acknowledged she also was unclear on what the 4 Square style of architecture is. She asked if anyone could explain it.

Staff Planner Teiche noted generally that it is a two-story home with a hipped roof and a centrally placed dormer on each roof plane. The new larger and wider dormer would further alter this symmetrical design. During the site visit with the historic architect, this side of the home and the existing dormer was visible from certain angles when standing on Madrone Ave. Additionally, it was noted that the larger dormer (dormer No. 3) would further increase the proposed floor area ratio.

Vice Chair Culhane asked if the Board Members wanted to move on to a discussion on the historic rehabilitation permit.

Commissioner Lanctot asked if the historic architect was supportive of dormer options No. 2 and 3 and staff Planner Teiche indicated she did not support them.

Commissioner Storek stated that if the architect and owner prefer to move forward with Option No. 3 that the Board should support this.

Vice Chair Culhane agreed and stated that the visible addition of a few feet of dormer was not significant. This is a small part of the overall change and could be determined to be acceptable.

Vice Chair Culhane asked if any member of the audience would like to speak on the application. There being none, Vice Chair Culhane closed the public hearing and brought the discussion to the Board.

Commissioner Culhane expressed concerned about the size of the rear addition but noted that the neighbors appeared to be supportive.

Board Member Galant asked staff to clarify which dormer option the historic architect supported. Staff indicated she was supportive of the dormer design depicted on the plans, and also reflected in dormer option No. 1. The historic architect did not support dormer options No 2 and 3 in the dormer study.

Vice Chair Culhane noted that the Board has taken the liberty of allowing some modification that was not necessarily in keeping with the recommendation of the historic architect. In this case the main impact would be on the neighbor to the east and they are supportive.

Commissioner Storek noted that Option No. 3 best supported the owners needs. If they are willing to preserve the historic home the Board could support this dormer option.

M/s Storek/Lanctot moved, and Board voted 4-0 (Chair Hobbel absent) to recommend approval of DR/H/FAR 21-18 for 68 Madrone Ave as proposed in the project plans, and with dormer option No. 3.

BUSINESS ITEMS

1. Presentation by the Larkspur Community Foundation regarding the Helen Heitkamp Community Foundation Fund – Sandy Blauvelt and Joan Lundstrom.

Sallyanne Wilson, member of the Community Foundation presented the Board with a background on the Community Foundation and several ideas for projects that can be funded by the Community Foundation. The foundation's history fund is set up at the behest of Helen Heitkamp, ex-Board Member and can financially support historic oriented projects. Possible projects included:

- Creating an e-book of the Boards publication "Larkspur Past and Present".
- Supporting history talks. The library organized one that was a success.
- They invite any suggestions for other projects. The goal is to educate newer residents on Larkspur history.

Staff planner Teiche also suggested the history fund could support the installation of benches and tables for the front porch of City Hall to provide residents who visit City Hall with a place to sit. The Board Members expressed support for this idea and asked how to best proceed.

It was also suggested that the foundation could support a film of the historic walk presented in the past by Richard Cunningham.

Foundation member Lundstrom suggested the Board support the creation of a historic walk with interpretive signs along Magnolia Avenue in the historic downtown. This has been done successfully in Tiburon.

Board Member Lanctot suggested the creation of a new history pamphlet that can be handed out to visitors in the library. She also noted that it is time to continue interviews of “old timers” who have lived and participated in Larkspur for years.

Board Member Culhane suggested the creation of a public space or gathering place with a three-dimensional representation of a lost building in a historic location, such as at the old train station.

2. Board Member Reports.

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES September 15, 2020

M/s Lanctot/Culhane and board approved 4-1 (Chair Hobbel absent) to approve the minutes of September 15, 2020.

NEXT MEETING DATE: TBD (Meetings are scheduled either quarterly or on an as-needed basis to review proposed development plans that impact a structure listed on Larkspur’s Inventory of Historic Resources.)

M/s Culhane moved, and the Board approved 4-1 (Chair Hobbel absent), to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristin Teiche, Senior Planner/Recording Secretary

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing minutes of the May 27, 2021 meeting were duly and regularly adopted during the September 23, 2021 meeting of the Heritage Preservation Board.



Kristin Teiche, Senior Planner/Recording Secretary