

LARKSPUR HERITAGE PRESERVATION BOARD
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF MAY 9, 2022

The Heritage Preservation Board was convened at 5:00 p.m. by Chair Culhane via teleconference due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19).

Commissioners Present: Chair Hillary Culhane, Carol Goldberg, Sonia Gallant, Leila Lancot, Richard Storek

Staff Present: Community Development Director Elise Semonian
Senior Planner Kristin Teiche

OPEN TIME FOR PUBLIC EXPRESSION

Mr. James Holmes wanted to draw the Board's attention to the Housing Element update. Several historically significant buildings are cited as possible sites for housing.

Senior Planner Teiche stated this issue could be placed on an upcoming Board agenda.

PLANNING STAFF'S ORAL REPORT

There was no report.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

- H/DR/HT #21-38, 47 Madrone Avenue; (APN: 021-112-30); Robert Wilkinson Architecture, Applicant; Kurt and Julie Houtkooper, Owners; R-1 (First Residential) Zoning District. Applicant proposes the following permits to extensively demolish, remodel and expand an existing 2,993 sq. ft. historic residence, including shifting the residence forward (north) 6 feet, and to the side (west) 2-foot 6 inches. New ground story and second floor additions, including an attached garage, would total 5,584 square feet with a 0.29 FAR where 0.40 is permitted by code on the 19,384 square-foot flat lot. Additional site improvements include a new circular entry driveway, site grading for relocated pool and below ground mechanical room, and installation of landscaping: 1) Historic review to evaluate alterations to the historic resource; 2) Design Review; 3) Heritage Tree Removal Permits to allow removal of six heritage sized trees.**

Senior Planner Teiche presented the staff report. She noted City Historic Architect Jerri Holan is recommending a condition that the railing and finishing trim work is consistent with the architectural style of the home. This could come back to the Board if they decide they want to review it. She discussed the story poles- the west side location is accurate but the poles to the front were not built to reflect the shifts forward and are not entirely accurate. She answered questions about moving the structure forward; the view from Madrone Avenue and if the face of the garage is in line with the front of the house setback.

Chair Culhane opened the Public Hearing.

Mr. Kurt Houtkooper made the following comments:

- They love the look and feel of the property and its significance in the community.
- They want to make the house as energy efficient as possible.
- They reached out to the neighbors and the response has been positive.
- The location of the Heritage Redwood trees impact the placement of the project.

Board member Gallant asked about the rationale for moving the house and the recommendation for preserving certain historic elements (windows). Mr. Houtkooper stated the trees prevented them from moving the house more forward. They are drawn to the sunny side of the site. It is a very vertical house which makes going backwards challenging.

Chair Culhane asked how they would incorporate energy efficiency while working with the historic requirements on the front windows. Mr. Houtkooper stated his architect could address this question.

Mr. Robert Wilkinson, architect, made the following comments:

- The 3-D rendering has been slightly altered so the house could be seen through the trees.
- The design concept respects the historic portion of the structure and separates the new additions where possible.
- The garage addition is connected to the house with a bridge, so the massing feels removed from the main structure.
- Both of the additions are to the rear of the house using the existing ridgeline as the demarcation point. They are keeping the existing ridgeline intact.
- The additions will be largely invisible from the street.
- Relocating the structure is based on having an extensive front yard while maximizing the available space in the rear yard.
- The existing brick foundation has to be replaced which would require lifting the house and moving it to replace the foundation.
- They are concerned about keeping the existing windows for a number of reasons- energy efficiency, waterproof integrity, several broken panes need to be replaced, and fire-resistant integrity of the building.
- They have a similar issue with the siding on the front elevation. They would like to remove it by hand, store it on site, and reinstall it. It is a practical solution.

Mr. James Holmes, Larkspur, made the following comments:

- He asked about the impact of these changes to the Historic Numeric Rating.
- He asked if the extensive demolition, etc. would impinge Historic Criteria Rating #2- "maintain the integrity of the historic resource".
- He asked about the effect of moving the structure and possible damage to the building.
- He wondered if moving the structure was necessary.
- There is a huge space in the back with very little in it except a swimming pool.
- He asked about the rationale for removal of the trees. The tree count is overstated.

Chair Culhane asked if Tree Removal Permits were under the purview of the Parks and Recreation Commission. Senior Planner Teiche stated "yes" unless it is in conjunction with a development application.

Mr. Don Baumbach made the following comments:

- They are the neighbors to the west and the most affected.
- He does not have a problem with the plan.
- He has a problem with moving the structure to the west.
- His property is non-conforming- the garage has a four-foot side yard setback.
- He could support moving the structure two feet, six inches to the west as long as they shave off the same amount on the existing structure.
- He would like to see a six-foot reduction in the proposed upper story laundry room.
- It is not necessary to have the laundry room kick out. The window looks into his bathroom and master bedroom.
- He would like the westward wall of the kitchen pushed forward by three feet.

- The broom closet should be eliminated.
- He discussed the property lines. (Senior Planner Teiche stated this is a civil matter.)
- The story poles on the west side might not be accurate. They should be re-examined.

Ms. Susan Bartholomew, Madrone Avenue, made the following comments:

- Her property sits behind Mr. Baumbach's property.
- Her master bedroom runs along the back of the proposed outdoor kitchen.
- The proposal is thoughtful.
- She did not support moving the structure to the west. It makes sense to move it forward on the property.
- She had no problem with the removal of the Poplar trees.

Mr. Wilkinson made the following comments:

- They located all the story poles of new additions in the position they will be in the proposed design. They are six feet forward and are accurate.
- At the front side of the house they put some stakes in for the new front corners.
- All poles are accurate based on the proposed site plan.

Chair Culhane asked if they were picking up the existing house and moving it 2.6 feet to the west and six feet to the north. Mr. Wilkinson stated "yes". The footprint on the west side is moving but not expanding.

Board member Lanctot asked if Mr. Baumach's suggestion would make the house smaller in those areas. Senior Planner Teiche stated "yes" and would require removing more historic material.

Mr. Baumbach made the following comment:

- He stated moving the building to the west by 2.6 feet and adding the eleven feet of "gray space" totals fourteen feet of new space moving closer to his family room and master bedroom.

Chair Culhane closed the Public Hearing.

City Historic Architect Holan provided the following comments:

- She is opposed to moving original buildings. However, in this case the impact to the neighborhood or the resource will not change much.
- It would not lose its character by moving it forward six feet. The relocation does not bother her.
- The building would benefit from a new foundation.
- In terms of character the standards are clear- deterioration beyond repair. This does not apply to the windows, siding, or trim. The intent is to have the original, historic materials.
- Taking off the old siding would result in a loss of character.
- Trees are considered a temporary and not a permanent screen.
- This proposal is an improvement over the first submittal.
- There would be a loss of an historic corner if they shaved off three feet on the first floor of the west side. She would not like to see this.
- The second-floor laundry room could be made smaller.
- This resource is rated a "B" with 75 Points.
- She is not concerned that this project would cause a "delisting" as long as the house is restored with the original windows and siding and the addition complies with the standards.

Board member Goldberg provided the following comment:

- The windows and the siding are the two important issues.

Board member Gallant provided the following comments:

- She agreed with the recommendations from City Historic Architect Holan with respect to the siding and windows.
- Preserving the windows would be her preference.
- She opposed shaving off anything from the first floor. The Board agreed.
- She asked if they should be reviewing the elements in the porch elevation.

City Historic Architect Holan stated the proposed pickets look more historical and the posts have picked up capitals. These elements are trending in the right direction. Staff could review these elements (railings, posts, and trellis) or bring them back to the Board. Chair Culhane stated staff could do this review. Board member Goldberg agreed- she did not want to hold up the permits.

Chair Culhane provided the following comments:

- There are some good safeguards in place to protect and maintain the original elements.
- She is impressed with the scope of the project.

M/s, Lanctot/Goldberg, motioned and the Board voted 4-0-1 (Storek absent) to recommend approval to the Planning Commission of H/DR/HT #21-38, 47 Madrone Avenue, subject to the findings and conditions presented in the staff report and the following modifications: 1) Additional review by City Historic Architect Holan as outlined in her May 5th letter requiring additional review and approval of the railings, post, and trellis treatment of the front porch; 2) The Board would not support any modification to the northwest front corner of the historic floor plan of the building but has no objections to modifications of the proposed second story if deemed appropriate by the Planning Commission.

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

BUSINESS ITEMS

1. Historic Marker Project- Board to discuss Historic Marker Project and provide a motion to support program and funding

Senior Planner Teiche presented a staff report.

Board member Lanctot noted there was a letter in the packet regarding this program. This will be a gradual project. There are eleven or twelve locations for the markers but they would start with five or six. There will be mention of the Coastal Miwok on a few the markers at appropriate locations.

Board member Goldberg supported the program. She asked if they could get sponsorship from the local merchants. Board member Lanctot stated “yes”. She would like to ask the Larkspur Community Foundation for a \$16,000 contribution with a match from the City from the Larkspur Past and Present book sales. She would like the Heritage Preservation Board to take the lead.

Chair Culhane asked if the Town of Corte Madera has a similar program. Board member Lanctot stated “yes” but her plan is to get better quality markers that will last longer. Each marker will cost about \$3,000. Installation will be done by the Public Works Department. They must be placed on public property and be ADA compliant.

Chair Culhane stated she was told that a marker could be considered another form of preservation. City Historic Architect Holan stated that was correct.

M/s, Culhane/Lanctot, motioned and the Board voted 4-0-1 (Storek absent) that this is a worthy project and to see funding from the Larkspur Community Foundation as well as a match from the City from the Larkspur Past and Present book sales. The number and location of markers will be discussed at a future Board meeting.

2. Board member reports

Chair Culhane asked if staff is planning on holding in-person meetings. Director Semonian stated the City Council will be meeting in a hybrid format (in person and zoom) with the Planning Commission following a similar format. Due to the cost and management necessary for a hybrid meeting, other Boards and Commissions may have to elect to hold meetings via one or the other and not in a hybrid format. Staff would probably allow the particular body to decide on the format. Senior Planner Teiche stated she would contact each Board member when they are authorized to hold in-person meetings.

3. Approval of Minutes- February 28, 2022

M/s, Lanctot/Gallant, motioned and the Commission voted 4-0-1 (Storek absent) to approve the minutes from the meeting of February 28, 2022 as submitted.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:16 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 Heritage Preservation Board on September 1, 2022.



Kristin Teiche, Senior Planner