



**MINUTES
SOLVANG DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING**

February 13, 2023
Monday
Regular Meeting – 5:00 p.m.

5:00 PM – REGULAR MEETING

1. PRELIMINARY MATTERS

CALL TO ORDER

Planning Manager Checa called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chamber, 1644 Oak Street, Solvang, California.

ROLL CALL

Present: Members: Esther Jacobsen Bates, Patrick Cavanaugh, Jennifer Dryden Hess, Cristopher Lapp, Maryvonne Laparriere Martin

Staff: Planning Consultant Laurie Tamura (via Zoom), Assistant City Attorney Chelsea O’Sullivan, Planning Manager Sophia Checa, City Clerk Annamarie Porter

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Led by Planning Manager Checa

APPROVE ORDER OF AGENDA AS PRESENTED

Motion by Member Dryden Hess, to approve the order of the agenda, as amended, moving Item No. 4.a. to immediately after this item, seconded by Member Jacobsen Bates, and carried, 5-0.

The DRC considered Item No. 4.a. at this juncture.

4.a Discussion and possible action to nominate the chairperson of the Design Review Committee

Planning Manager Checa called for nominations.

Motion by Member Jacobsen Bates, to appoint Member Patrick Cavanaugh as Chairperson of the DRC, seconded by Member Dryden Hess, and carried, 5-0.

City Staff and Committee Members introduced themselves.

The DRC returned to consider Item No. 2.a. and 2.b. of the agenda.

2. CONSENT ITEMS

Member Jacobsen Bates pulled Item No. 2.b. for separate consideration.

a. Approve Minutes of the December 15, 2022 Meeting

Motion by Member Jacobsen Bates, to approve the December 15, 2022 minutes seconded by Member Dryden Hess, and carried, 5-0.

b. Receive and file Current Planning and Building Division Projects February 2022

Discussion followed regarding the status of the Bangles and Bourbon project.

There were no public comments.

Motion by Member Dryden Hess, to approve Item No. 2.b. of the Consent Calendar, as amended to keep the Bangles and Bourbon project on the list, seconded by Member Jacobsen Bates, and carried, 5-0.

3. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS – NON AGENDA

There were no public comments on this item.

4. DISCUSSION

4.a Discussion and possible action to nominate the chairperson of the Design Review Committee

Heard before Item 2 above.

b. Discussion and possible action to approve the proposed wall sign, a proposed projecting sign, and the proposed exterior paint colors for El Rinconsito Market at 1656 Fir Avenue, Units A and B

Planning Manager Checa presented details of the proposed project and recommended consideration of the exterior paint and approval of the proposed signs.

There were no public comments on this item.

Discussion followed regarding approving the proposed paint colors, the sign location, materials, placement and sizes, the color of the sign bracket, the possibility of using wood-looking acrylic material for the sign instead of aluminum and considering the frontage of the market is not where there is much pedestrian traffic.

Motion by Member Dryden Hess, to approve the proposed wall sign, a proposed projecting sign, and the proposed exterior paint colors for El Rinconsito Market at 1656 Fir Avenue, Units A and B, seconded by Member Jacobsen Bates, and carried, 5-0.

c. Discussion and possible action to provide recommendation to the Planning Commission on the proposed architecture, colors, materials, exterior lighting, and landscaping for the proposed multi-family project at 420 Fifth Street

Assistant City Attorney O’Sullivan provided a framework for the DRC’s consideration; noted that because it is for a multi-family housing project, the City Council and Planning Commission are restricted, under State law, on the basis of which they can deny a housing project and on which they can condition a housing development project. She encouraged the DRC to develop recommendations that can be useful to the Planning Commission and avoid making recommendations that would create a decrease in density and noted that per SB 330, the City is limited to five hearings on the project.

Planning Manager Checa presented details of the proposed project.

Chair Cavanaugh invited public comments.

Susan Bott, Save Our Stars Committee, We Watch, via Zoom, spoke about exterior lighting.

Discussion followed regarding the building height, dark-sky compliance, balancing “Old World Charm” with the proposed modern architecture, changing exterior materials and colors to “soften up” the architecture, the lack of harmony in material, color and composition with surrounding structures, parking, choices of landscaping materials, fast-growing plants and consideration of State requirements for housing.

Avraham Mittelman, Architect, spoke about the modern design; believed it was to be distinguished from typical Danish designs; discussed the interior courtyard; urged the DRC to suggest changes without having to start from the beginning; noted different types of architecture in surrounding areas including mid-century, 70's, 80's and 90's; reported receiving design guidelines specifically staying away from Danish architecture with new projects, and agreed to reconsider window styles/treatments and changes in elevations.

There being no others wishing to address the DRC, Chair Cavanaugh closed public comments.

Discussion continued regarding making the design “less boxy”, making it consistent with the rural, agricultural, and small-town setting, directing the architect to return with a “more suitable” style that will be consistent with the surrounding architecture, using less contrast, softening the style with sustainable landscaping, using structure or wrought iron instead of plain poles for lighting, starting fresh to develop a design that is more suitable for the location, avoiding a continuance of the project, if possible.

The DRC considered recommendations to install a parapet in a Spanish style and use lighter paint colors for the buildings, change the materials, reduce the amount of stucco used and consider installing natural siding for the elevations facing 5th Street, Oak Street, and the north elevation.

Planning Manager Checa spoke about giving specific recommendations so that she can work with the applicant to make the recommended changes prior to presenting it to the Planning Commission.

Discussion followed regarding the center part of the courtyard, removing the lines and using a lighter paint color, horizontal rails competing with vertical rails, the possibility of installing awnings over some of the windows to mitigate excessive heat, softening the vertical and horizontal lines along with the entire structure, potentially adding brick and breaking up the massing.

Planning Manager Checa spoke about forming an ad hoc committee to work with staff and the applicant.

Member Jacobsen Bates noted the proposed changes will result in a different project and believed it will be worth it to continue the matter to another meeting.

Motion by Member Jacobsen Bates, to continue the item to a date, uncertain, form an ad hoc committee to work with staff and the applicant to implement changes discussed and return to the DRC with details of the modified project to soften the design to compliment the environment, incorporating organic elements into the design and limiting some of the vertical and horizontal lines of the railings and making the lighting a warm tone and reviewing the landscaping to provide better screening and softening of the structure and keeping the building cool (taller, cylindrical shrubs), seconded by Member Dryden Hess, and carried, 5-0.

Motion by Member Jacobsen Bates, to form an ad hoc committee comprised of Members Lapp and Dryden Hess to work with staff and the applicant on modifications to the project, seconded by Member Dryden Hess, and carried, 5-0.

RECESS/RECONVENE

Chair Cavanaugh called for a recess at 6:59 p.m. and reconvened at 7:05 p.m. with all Members,

present.

d. Discussion and possible action to receive the 2023 Design Review Committee Training

Assistant City Attorney O’Sullivan narrated a PowerPoint presentation addressing the role of the DRC, the Brown Act, Parliamentary Procedure Basics, Conflicts of Interest and the Public Records Act.

Motion by Member Jacobsen Bates, to receive the 2023 Design Review Committee Training, seconded by Member Dryden Hess, and carried, 5-0.

5. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS

There was general consensus to direct staff to place creation of a Vice Chair position and action to nominate a Vice Chair on the DRC’s next agenda.

6. CITY STAFF COMMENTS

Planning Manager Checa reported the City hired a Community Service Officer and noted she will begin enforcing signs that are prohibited in the code and discussed items on the agenda for the next DRC meeting.

7. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

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Sophia Checa
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Sophia Checa, Planning Manager