# CITY OF REDMOND DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2010

NOTE: These minutes are not a full transcription of the meeting. Tapes are available for public review

in the Redmond Planning Department.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: David Scott Meade, Chairperson; Heather Tomlin, Vice Chair; Joe

Palmquist, Sadia Hasan, Janey Gregory, Scott Waggoner

STAFF PRESENT: Dennis Lisk, Associate Planner; Asma Jeelani, Associate Planner; Steve Fischer,

Principle Senior Planner

**RECORDING SECRETARY:** Lady of Letters, Inc.

The Design Review Board is appointed by the City Council to make decisions on design issues regarding site planning, building elevations, landscaping, lighting and signage. Decisions are based on the design criteria set forth in the Redmond Development Guide.

## **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by the Chairperson of the Design Review Board, David Scott Meade, at 7:00 P.M.

## **MINUTES**

MOTION TO APPROVE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 18<sup>TH</sup>, 2010 MEETING MADE BY MS. TOMLIN, SECONDED BY MR. PALMQUIST. MOTION APPROVED (6-0).

MOTION TO APPROVE MINUTES OF THE MARCH  $4^{TH}$ , 2010 MEETING MADE BY MR. PALMQUIST, SECONDED BY MS. HASAN. MOTION APPROVED (5-0), WITH ONE ABSTENTION.

## **PROJECT REVIEW**

## B100176, Point Redmond Restoration

**Description:** Renovate building exterior with new materials and finishes. Repair and or replace portions of roof membrane. New accessible parking and signage.

Location: 16717 Redmond Way

Applicant: Rick Grimes with Freiheit & Ho Architects, Inc.

Staff Contact: Asma Jeelani, (425)556-2443 or ajeelani@redmond.gov

Ms. Tomlin and Mr. Palmquist recused themselves from this review. Ms. Jeelani noted this development has been in the works for six or seven years as Victoria Center. Due to economic reasons, that project is not viable anymore. Now, the owner is working on a very minor remodel. Some parking areas will be improved, curbs will be added, and landscaping will be added. The project is between Cleveland Street and Redmond Way, in the Old Town district of Downtown Redmond. The surrounding buildings do not have a style this project could follow. The project includes some new colors for the building, as well. The Board has seen this project before in a pre-application, and liked what was presented. Some new vertical elements have been added to the design, which Ms. Jeelani says may not have signage on them. Staff has requested the Board to approve three conditions, including an issue about the sidewalk, a concern over the vertical elements, and the standard inconsistencies conditions staff requests with every project.

Amy Collins spoke on behalf of the applicant. She has completed all the items the DRB has requested, including raising up some storefronts and adding some vertical elements. Ms. Collins has two options in terms of color, and asked the Board for input. Regarding sidewalks, there was an idea to add some different colors to indicate ramp areas for delivery vans or other vehicles, but the applicant has removed those delivery areas and turned them into storefronts. Ms. Jeelani added that this project area will be developed in the future; this project represents a short-term facelift. The applicant will repaint the siding and add stucco finish and corrugated metal to the storefronts. Ms. Gregory likes Option 1 presented to the DRB, not Option 2. Ms. Hasan echoed that sentiment.

#### COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD MEMBERS:

### Ms. Gregory:

- Noted that the vertical elements could be spread further apart as a cost-saving measure.
- The applicant says putting these elements on the north elevation did not look good.

### Mr. Waggoner:

- Says that the last time the project was before the Board, the DRB discussed the east end of the project; raising the storefronts appears to answer some of these concerns
- Likes Option 1 in terms of color, but says Option 2 has an interesting trim board that might be added
  to create a shadow line. The applicant says that could happen. The color, in Mr. Waggoner's opinion,
  could remain the same as the building's main color.

## Mr. Meade:

- Asked about a new sign program, and if the signs will be redone.
- Mr. Fischer says a sign program will have to go with this, and the applicant will have to work with the City's sign code administrator. The applicant says that process is underway.

MOTION TO APPROVE B100176, POINT REDMOND RESTORATION, MADE BY MR. WAGGONER AND SECONDED BY MS. HASAN, WITH THE OPTION 1 COLOR SCHEME. THE DESIGN TEAM FOR THIS PROJECT WILL CONSIDER ADDING A TRIM PIECE AROUND THE EAST AND SOUTH END OF THE BUILDING AT WINDOWSILL HEIGHT, TO BE WORKED OUT WITH STAFF. STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS WILL ALSO APPLY. MOTION PASSES (4-0), WITH TWO MEMBERS RECUSED.

#### DISCUSSION

## PRE100014, Bel-Red Rapid Ride

**Description:** Informational presentation of Metro's Rapid Ride Program for City of Redmond, alignment

and schedule

Location: 15590 NE 36<sup>th</sup> St

**Applicant:** Nancy Gordon with King County Department of Transportation **Staff Contact:** Asma Jeelani, (425)556-2443 or ajeelani@redmond.gov

Ms. Jeelani noted that this project was a new bus line proposed by the County to go from Redmond to the downtown Bellevue Transit Center. This project will re-construct bus zones to coordinate with the Metro Rapid Ride program. The service will run on major arterials, including NE 80<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> Street, 156<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE, 40<sup>th</sup> Street, 148<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE, and 90<sup>th</sup> Street. In the City of Redmond, this project will create 27 bus zones; out of these, 23 are existing bus zones that currently have shelters. Due to the fact that more buses will be running, the existing shelters will be taken down and replaced by new shelters. New shelters will also be added at the site of new bus stops. These schedules will have real-time bus information, new sidewalks, and other improved features for riders. The project is in development now, but the applicant, King County Metro, has already ordered these shelters, which are pre-designed. Ms. Jeelani says there is not much to talk about, in terms of the pre-fabricated shelters. If there are issues on the application dealing with landscaping, for example, that will come back before the Board. This is merely an informational presentation.

## **DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

## L090380, RCDG Rewrite

Description: Review and discussion of a proposed change to the variety in building design standard

from the neighborhood residential design standards

Location: Citywide

**Applicant:** City of Redmond

Staff Contacts: Dennis Lisk, (425)556-2471 or dwlisk@redmond.gov

Mr. Lisk told the Board the City has been working on a zoning code rewrite program to make the Code clearer, more concise, and more user-friendly. There should not be a lot of policy changes in the

document. In the neighborhood planning process, however, design standards have provided a challenge to staff on some matters. Those standards cover site design, landscaping, and other considerations. One standard addresses variety in building design, which is to ensure against a lot of repetition within a development. In the neighborhood standards, a limit of 20% has been set on the repetition of the same combination of building elements or treatments. That means that in a development of 20 homes, 4 homes could look alike.

Also, there are nine different design elements listed in the Code that developers can use to provide differentiation throughout a development. Ms. Gregory asked if these elements would govern apartment complexes. Mr. Lisk replied that those types of buildings would adhere to a citywide standard dealing with multi-family projects. The design elements he is discussing are mainly for single-family homes, with the possibility of duplexes in some developments. Mr. Lisk says these elements are deficient in some ways, in that more weight is not given to design factors like roof slope, setback, or façade articulation, for example. The Code Rewrite Commission has directed staff to deal with this issue, and staff has found another code that uses a primary and secondary system to help limit repetition of architectural features. Staff has taken that code and tried to meld it with the neighborhood design elements. Mr. Lisk is asking the DRB if the City should consider such a primary and secondary system, and what elements should be considered.

Mr. Lisk showed the DRB some design examples in different neighborhoods, which show some very similar-looking houses. In one North Redmond neighborhood, a developer met the standard of the Code, even though the homes did not look all that different. The Code Rewrite Commission is also hoping to encourage some different and more contemporary home design styles; in the current trend, Redmond has seen developers build the same type of home for the last 10-15 years. Mr. Lisk says if these neighborhood standards exist into the future, they could force homeowners into creating a structure they may not want.

#### COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD MEMBERS:

## Ms. Gregory:

- Believes the trend in home building in Redmond has created the same home for more than 15 years, and says the economy is driving the simplicity of design.
- Would like to encourage sustainable practices and make homes less "cookie-cutter."
- Mr. Lisk responded that the City is in the middle of a sustainability project right now, in the hopes of encouraging more innovative design. The green incentive in place in the City right now has not drawn much activity due to economic considerations.

#### Mr. Meade:

- Drew up the code for the Issaquah Highlands neighborhood, a community called Woodside, developed by the same master planner, Cascadia, a 10,000-home development and Broadmoor.
- Says the repetition of floor plans is based on the amounts of lots involved in the development, but says the window pattern or door placement is a key factor.
- Says when the repetition is broken, there is still some continuity needed to provide relief from the variety.
- Believes the quickest way to make changes in this regard would be to create images that would illustrate the goals the City has in mind, with notes about the desirable design elements. Would rather have the Code focus on "do this" rather than "do not do this."
- Says the City has a great opportunity for change right now, as many builders have folded in the current economy. He says new elements like butterfly roofs and environmental responsibility are a new, popular trend.
- Recommended a minimum sustainability standard for the Code, and allow the builder to pick from a number of certifications. Wants the Code to encourage responsible, sustainable remodeling for current homeowners, too.
- Mr. Lisk says the City is working on a design manual to provide the images Mr. Meade is talking about, to make sure there are different pictures and styles encapsulated. Mr. Meade will provide some of his pictures and images to staff to help in this process.
- Mr. Meade says the Code can fight within itself when it comes to the percentage of glazing, for example. He wants to make sure there is some give and take in the Code.

Would like to encourage water-efficient species and native plants that are drought-resistant. Also
encouraging good soil preparation.

## Mr. Fischer:

- Asked the DRB if some of the new designs found in Seattle's Queen Anne neighborhood, for example, would wind up in Redmond.
- The DRB members said not at all. Ms. Tomlin says she would like some different home designs in Redmond; she sees too many cookie cutter style homes. Mr. Meade says that is a function of how Redmond was developed, as a suburb. He noted that he is suggesting more modern designs to his clients, as well.

## Ms. Gregory:

- Noted that every site is contoured differently, and would like to make sure homeowners respect those natural changes in elevation, perhaps in a codified way. She admitted that might be more expensive.
- Mr. Lisk pointed out that the Code Rewrite Commission is looking into how the City measures building height. One constraint of the rewrite is to avoid creating too many policy changes, and making changes in measurement would be a change of that nature.
- Mr. Lisk says different measurement standards may apply to different neighborhoods in the City, such that average existing grade might be used in some areas, and other standards for building should be used in other neighborhoods. Bellevue has been trying out this technique.
- The CRC has tabled the measurement discussion, for now. Ms. Gregory noted that using natural changes in height provides a natural variation for homes.
- Mr. Meade added that using a more modern design, which includes a flatter roof, can help add height to homes.

## Mr. Fischer:

- Mr. Fischer countered that different designs can cost more; with a flat site, one design can fit any home site on a development. He added that the height calculation issue will come up again, and thanked the DRB for their points about breaking up monotony in developments.
- Mr. Fischer will bring those arguments back to the discussion with the Code Rewrite Commission.
- Says he will add pictures, at the DRB's urging, in a separate handbook rather than right in the Code entry. He asked for more design standard recommendations in the residential zones.
- Is taking Mr. Meade's comments about moving away from Craftsman style homes seriously, but notes
  that design is selling, and builders are still using it. He says the design community appears to need a
  nudge "off high center."

## Mr. Meade:

- Mr. Meade says the developer should write a design standard and sell a vision for a development.
   DRB members were in approval of this idea.
- Mr. Meade says this could help take the onus off the DRB and staff, and could give the City some flexibility when it comes to design. The idea would be that a designer could use the City's standards, but would have to add some enhancements from there. He says little details can mean a lot in larger developments, like fence positions and the amount of outdoor living space, for example.
- Ms. Tomlin says that should allow the Code to be less prescriptive, which in turn should allow for more creativity.
- Mr. Meade says the City has missed an opportunity at 148<sup>th</sup> and Redmond Way, which is a big "gateway" development to Redmond Way. The homes look very similar.

## Mr. Palmquist:

- Says the development at the intersection Mr. Meade mentioned was designed in that way because
  the City has such a big Code. Any developer looking at it sees a lot of restrictions, which regulates a
  common denominator.
- Noted that builders are maximizing the space they can use, so they will skip directly to the standards of roofline changes, color changes, and roof material changes that are easy and cheap.
- Says the Code actually fights against variety. He likes the developer coming up with a design plan for a community, but would like to see no restrictions at all.

- Says people do not want to move into a cookie cutter neighborhood, and such homes could sell.
   Asked Mr. Fischer and Mr. Lisk how this Code would impact remodels.
- Mr. Lisk says the standards would not apply to remodels. Now, the Code says if the remodel reaches
  a certain threshold, such as exceeding the property value by 50%, the standards would kick in.
- Mr. Meade says a lot of homeowners want to remodel, but want to stay away from that threshold as a cost-saving measure. Some homeowners feel they are being punished for making big changes.
- Mr. Palmquist would like staff to help make remodels as easy as possible; the more neighbors remodel, the more other neighbors want to make changes themselves, creating true variety.
- Ms. Tomlin says some people will not move to the Eastside because of the cookie cutter homes in Redmond and Bellevue.
- Mr. Palmquist says anytime a developer designs something "green," incentives must be added to help the developer save money.
- Mr. Lisk says the City's green program right now is incentive-based, and the green techniques and incentives are not tied together, which should allow for a lot of flexibility. Staff is anxious for a project to come through that could use that program, but the economy has slowed a lot of building activity.

#### Mr. Meade:

- Says he is working on a LEED Platinum home in Seattle right now; the process has been difficult because the green incentives do not apply to remodels. He says remodels should be included in that incentive program.
- Mr. Fischer said he would look into how the Code could apply to remodels. Mr. Meade says he would encourage that, in that current residents are the people he wants to support almost more than developers of new homes.
- Mr. Palmquist says there are a number of remodels coming soon in Redmond.
- Mr. Meade says in Issaquah, there is an outside consulting group reviewing the work of developers to keep a close eye on residential development design.
- Mr. Palmquist says having a hired consulting group might be a good option for Redmond. Mr. Meade says the setup has been beneficial for Issaguah, in his opinion.

## Mr. Lisk:

- Told the DRB he appreciated tonight's comments and the effort to move design standards in a different direction.
- Reminded the Board there are some constraints on changing design standards, out of respect to the neighborhood process. That could create a delicate balance.
- Mr. Meade agreed that creating neighborhood rules is a balancing act, and if neighbors are not interested in how their area will develop over time, that can create stagnant design.
- Mr. Meade added that some large communities have neighborhood signs that need upkeep, and some decades-old landscaping needs to be cleaned up, too.
- Mr. Fischer thanked the DRB again for its time.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION MADE BY MS. TOMLIN, AND SEC AT 8:27 P.M. MOTION PASSES (6-0).	ONDED BY MS. HASAN, TO ADJOURN THE MEETING
MINUTES APPROVED ON	RECORDING SECRETARY