AGENDA
REGULAR MEETING
OF THE
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
7:30 p.m.
Wednesday, February 7, 2018
El Cerrito City Hall
Council Chambers
10890 San Pablo Avenue, El Cerrito

This Meeting Place Is Wheelchair Accessible

Roll Call: Chair: Carl Groch; Board Members: Maggie Leighly, Patrick Riley, John Thompson, and Glenn Wood.

1. Comments from the Public
(Each speaker is limited to a maximum of 3 minutes)

2. Approval of Minutes
Approval of the minutes of the December 6, 2017

3. Board Member Communication/Conflicts of Interest Disclosure
This time on the agenda is reserved for Board Members to disclose communications from individuals regarding specific agenda items or to state a potential conflict of interest in relation to a specific agenda item.

4. Public Hearing – 1613 Elm Street Duplex
Application: PL17-0021
Applicant: Kevin Stong
Location: 1613 Elm Street
Zoning: RD (Duplex Residential)
General Plan: Medium Density Residential
APN: 502-211-012
Request: Design Review Board consideration of the creation of a duplex
CEQA: The project is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to Section 15270(a), projects which a public agency rejects or disapproves.

5. Staff Communications

6. Adjournment

COMMUNICATION ACCESS INFORMATION
To request a meeting agenda in large print, Braille, or on cassette, or to request a sign language interpreter for the meeting, call Margaret Kavanaugh-Lynch, Staff Liaison at (510) 215-4330 (voice) at least FIVE (5) WORKING DAYS NOTICE PRIOR TO THE MEETING to ensure availability.

10890 San Pablo Avenue, El Cerrito, CA 94530 Tel: (510) 215-4330
E-mail: mkavanaugh-lynch@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us
MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING
OF THE
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

7:30 p.m.
Wednesday, December 6, 2017
El Cerrito City Hall
Council Chambers
10890 San Pablo Avenue, El Cerrito

This Meeting Place Is Wheelchair Accessible

Roll Call: Chair: Carl Groch; Board Members: Maggie Leighly, Patrick Riley, John Thompson and Glenn Wood.

1. Comments from the Public
No comments were received.

2. Approval of Minutes
Motion to approve the minutes of the September 6, 2017 meeting: Thompson; 2nd Leighly.
Vote:
Ayes: Groch, Leighly, Riley
Noes: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Thompson, Wood

3. Board Member Communication/Conflict of Interest Disclosure
Nothing was reported.

4. Public Hearing – 10135 San Pablo Avenue
Application: PL16-0005
Applicant: Tom Zhang
Location: 10135 San Pablo Avenue
APN: 510-034-001, and 510-034-002
Zoning: Transit-Oriented High-Intensity Mixed Use (TOHIMU)
General Plan: Transit-Oriented High-Intensity Mixed Use (TOHIMU)
Request: Design Review Board discussion, input and recommendations associated to the purview of Tier II Design Review, pursuant to the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan, for a new 6-story mixed-use building containing 73 residential units, and 4,270 square feet of commercial space. No action will be taken at this meeting.

Consulting Planner, Elizabeth Dunn, presented the staff report and answered questions from the Board.
City of El Cerrito
Design Review Board Meeting Minutes

Tom Zhang, applicant and architect for the project, presented the project and answered questions from the Board.

The public hearing was opened.

The following speakers addressed the Board:

Randall Bellamy, 6025 Avila Street, El Cerrito
Howdy Goudey, 635 Elm Street, El Cerrito
Cameron Carr, 6024 Avila Street, El Cerrito
Garland Ellis, Vice President, Richmond Annex Neighborhood Council
Lucy Ling, Architect

The public hearing was closed.

The Design Review Board provided comments about the project to the applicant.

The applicant will revise the proposed project, and staff will bring the project back to the Design Review Board at a future date.

5. **Staff Communications**
   Staff updated the board about upcoming meetings and upcoming projects.

6. **Adjournment**
   10:00 p.m.
DETAILS

Application Number: PL17-0021

Applicant: Kevin Stong

Location: 1613 Elm Street

APN: 502-211-012

Zoning: RD (Duplex Residential)

General Plan: Medium Density Residential

Request: Design Review Board consideration of a Design Review application to add a new two story addition (of 2,619 square feet) to an existing single story single family residence, creating a duplex development on the lot (Section 19.38.020 B. 2. b. of the El Cerrito Municipal Code).

CEQA: The project is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to Section 15270(a), projects which a public agency rejects or disapproves.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The proposed project is to create a new duplex in the RD, Duplex Residential, zoning district on the 1600 block of Elm Street. A duplex is an allowed use in the RD zoning district. The proposal is to attach a new two-story residential unit to an existing single-story unit and provide four covered parking spaces for the two units.

This project was first reviewed by the Design Review Board (DRB) at its June 7, 2017 meeting. The Board provided a list of recommendations regarding the design of the project and continued the item.

The applicant submitted a revised proposal. Staff has reviewed the revised plans and finds that while some of the recommendations have been incorporated, others important design elements were not integrated into the project.

Staff believes that a more integrated design incorporating the Design Review Board’s comments and revised site planning is needed for this project to be able to meet the findings of design review.

Based on the information and analysis contained in this report, staff is unable to make the required findings, and therefore is recommending denial without prejudice of the proposed duplex.
Background

Site Location and Previous Review of the Proposal

On February 21, 2017, the applicant submitted a proposal for Design Review to add another unit to the lot and create a duplex. Section 19.38.020.B.2.b. of the El Cerrito Municipal Code requires Design Review Board (DRB) consideration for any residential project with two or more units.

The site is located along the west side of Elm Street, between Blake Street and Potrero Avenue. The lot is developed with a single-family residential structure that was built in 1937. The subject property is relatively flat in terms of topography and is 5,000 square feet in size.

June 7, 2017 Design Review Board Meeting

This project was first reviewed by the Design Review Board (DRB) at its June 7, 2017 meeting. The Board provided a list of issues regarding the design of the project and continued the item. Staff has provided a summary of the issues identified by the Board at this meeting below. The meeting minutes from this meeting are Attachment 2.

- Stucco at the control joints.
- Hipped roof above the addition.
- No bay windows.
- Articulate the windows (utilize as a major architectural element).
- Three panel windows.
- Entry element seems to be an afterthought. It doesn’t seem to be part of the building.
- Lower the height of the second floor.
- Existing roof should not slope towards the second story wall.
- Entry feature should be part of the house.
- Exterior materials, consider horizontal siding.
- Incorporate a larger front porch.
- Consider larger eaves.
- No brick base.
- Possible pergola above the garage and can be brought over the entry way.
- Provide revised landscaping plan.
- One garage door.

The applicant worked with staff to respond to the issues identified by the Board; revised plans have been submitted for staff review and consideration by the Design Review Board.
Analysis

Project Description

The applicant is proposing to attach a two-story, 2,619 square foot unit next to an existing single family residence creating a duplex. The existing house is 1,015 square feet in size, and an addition of 145 square feet is proposed at the front of the existing house. The existing unit will have a change to the floor plan, as one of the bedrooms will become office space, and the master bedroom will be relocated to the front of the residence, and enlarged. The proposed unit consists of a living room, dining room, kitchen, and half bath on the first floor, and three bedrooms, two full baths, and study/entertainment room on the second floor.

The proposed design presents a Minimal Traditional architecture, a style prevalent in the 1920s and 1930s, which exists in this neighborhood. The proposed new two-story unit is massed in a rectangular shape that is topped with a front facing hipped roof and is approximately 23 ft., 6 inches in height to the ridge of the roof. The addition is recessed ten feet from the front of the existing dwelling in order to provide the setback of 20 feet for the 4 garage parking spaces for both units. The project meets all applicable development standards as listed in Table 1 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development Standards</th>
<th>Zoning Ord. Standard</th>
<th>Proposed Project</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lot Coverage</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>49.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setbacks: Front</td>
<td>10 ft. / 20 ft. garage setback</td>
<td>20 ft.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sides</td>
<td>5ft.</td>
<td>5ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rear</td>
<td>15ft.</td>
<td>15 ft.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Height</td>
<td>30 ft.</td>
<td>23 ft., 6 inches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open Space: Common</td>
<td>150 sq. ft per unit, 300 sq. ft. total</td>
<td>750+ sq. ft.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Ground Unit -100 sq. ft.</td>
<td>Ground Unit (x 2) 200 sq. ft.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking</td>
<td>4 covered spaces</td>
<td>4 covered spaces (garage)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Discussion

Response to Board Comments from previous meeting

Design and architecture

Staff has reviewed the revised plans, and finds that while some of the comments have been incorporated, others were not integrated into the revised plan set. The comments raised by the Board at the June 2017 meeting that have not been incorporated into the revised drawings are noted below:

- Entry feature should be part of the house.
- Incorporate a larger front porch.
- Consider larger eaves.
- Possible pergola above the garage and can be brought over the entry way.
- One garage door.
- Provide revised landscaping plan.
Staff notes that the proposed project did not respond to many of the important design recommendations that the Board shared with the applicant. Further, staff still finds that there may be an underlying problem that has not been remedied; that the Board comments were trying to resolve. The proposal reads as one unit added to another, and not construction of a single residential duplex that presents a unified architectural theme that would be compatible with the neighborhood.

As proposed, the project consists of the addition of a new dwelling unit next to an existing unit on an existing site that was not initially created for two units. The new unit is added, but not integrated, onto the lot. Staff does note that paint and exteriors finishes discussed below have been introduced to remedy this concern and that the applicant responded to the Board’s direction by focusing more on these finishes. However, staff does not find that the applicant has responded sufficiently to the Board’s comments and the elements not added were essential to be able to support the project.

Moreover, staff finds that it is the site planning from the conception of the project may be causing the underlying design issue. By approaching the project in this way, the new dwelling unit has to accommodate the existing dwelling unit’s location and four parking spaces within its footprint, all on the existing lot. This constraint leaves the Elm Street elevation dominated by the two garage doors and a massive two-story facade of the proposed unit, although a small front porch is also present. This design also relegates access to the new front door of the proposed unit around the side of the main façade, tucked along the southern side yard elevation. The resulting project has an uneven, monolithic front elevation that is not contextual with the existing neighborhood from the standpoint of overall site planning or a relevant design aesthetic. While staff is not opposed to two-story additions in this area, the lop-sided massing of the project is not context sensitive to, and incongruous with, the streetscape of this block of Elm Street where only single-story structures exist.

The Design Review Board’s comments that were not addressed in this revised proposal highlight this concern. Issues such as a larger, integrated front porch, and a more unified entry feature for the proposed unit, are one of the major concerns that would have been addressed if the project had been redesigned as requested.

Similarly, other comments provided by the Board, such as larger eaves, possibly creating a pergola above the garage and bringing this over the entry way, and having one garage door were also attempts to visually integrate the two units into one cohesive building. Larger eaves provide better balance and scale, and create symmetry to a residential structure. The creation of a pergola would enhance the appearance of a structure from the street, as it creates a focal point when viewing the structure. Installing one larger garage door creates a more streamlined appearance, and does not create a choppy perspective to the public facing elevation of a structure. The addition of these features would have moved the project a long way towards the creation of a cohesive appearance for the duplex and greatly improved the pedestrian experience of the front façade.

**Revised materials, finishes and landscaping**

The materials to be used for the new structure include horizontal siding, cement plaster siding, vinyl slider windows, and a composition shingle roof. The colors chosen are primarily cool earth tones for the body of the structure with light beige as color of the horizontal siding, and a highlighted by a lighter antique white for the wood trim. The top of the belly band, separating the first floor and the second floor of the new unit, is located approximately twelve feet from the finished grade and around the front, side and rear elevations. Horizontal siding is proposed on all elevations of both units. For the new residential unit, this is most apparent as it meets the belly band on the front elevation, and is on the
second floor above the roof overhang of the side access to the front door. These finishes do increase the exterior cohesiveness, but are not successful at addressing all of the concerns of compatibility.

The landscaping materials have also been revised – replacing petite oleander with French lavender for the new plant materials beneath the front elevation of the existing unit, and French lavender for the petite oleander, and Chinese pistache for the Chinese hackberry along the side yard (and southern) elevation for the proposed two-story unit. Similar substitutions of plant materials have been made for the southern side yard elevation of the proposed unit.

**Neighborhood Compatibility**

The segment of Elm Street between Blake Street and Potrero Avenue has two zoning designations. Along the west side of the street, the zoning designation is RD (Residential Duplex) and the east side is RS-5 (Single Family-Residential). Single family residential structures surround the subject lot to the north, south, east, and west. Of the ten lots along the west side of Elm Street with the RD zoning, two are 5,000 square feet in size and eight are substandard (2,500 sf. to 4,800 sf.).

With the exception of a duplex at the northwest and northeast corner of Blake and Elm Streets, and one unit near the northeast corner of Blake and Elm Streets, the balance of the residential structures on the 1600 block of Elm Street are single-story units, with an average height of 15 feet. The west and east side of Elm Street have similar lot sizes, of 2,500 to 5,000 square feet, with homes of a comparable height, that range from 798 square feet on a lot of 2,500 square feet to a 5,000 square foot lot with a 1,649 square foot residential unit. All of these units have front entrances that face Elm Street, many have small porch areas, with either one-car attached or detached garages where the detached garage is at the rear of the property. These similar features, that are repeated along the street, establish a design pattern which creates a warm and friendly personality to this block of Elm Street.

The proposal reads as one unit added to another, and not as a residential duplex that presents a unified architectural theme, that incorporates the features described above that would be compatible with the neighborhood. The proposed larger unit overpowers the existing unit, due to the bulk of the unit, and creates an imbalanced residential structure. The 5,000 square foot lot has the width and depth to accommodate a duplex that reads as a more cohesive unit, yet the necessary site planning has not occurred to take advantage of the dimensions that exist with the property.

Staff believes that a more integrated design incorporating the Design Review Board’s comments and revised site planning is needed for this project to be able to meet the findings of design review.

**Public Notice and Comment**

The required public notice for the project was published in the East Bay Times and mailed to owners of property within 300 feet of the project site on or before January 24, 2018. Staff has not received any comments about this proposal.
Environmental Review

The project is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to Section 15270(a), projects which a public agency rejects or disapproves.

Consistency with the General Plan

The proposed project is not consistent with the vision outlined in the General Plan. The following General Plan policies are relevant to the proposed project:

LU1.2 Multifamily Neighborhoods. Ensure that new development in multi-family neighborhoods supports, rather than detracts, from the existing residential character of the area.

LU1.3 Quality of Development. Ensure that all multi-family or mixed use development in residential areas addresses compatibility and quality of life issues.

CD1.3 High-Quality Design. Encourage higher-quality design through the use of well-crafted and maintained buildings and landscaping, use of higher-quality building materials, and attention to the design and execution of building details and amenities in both public and private projects.

The project does not meet these standards. The proposed new two-story unit is attached to the existing one-story unit, and this creates a residential structure that is out of proportion to what exists on the site, and incongruous with streetscape of this block of Elm Street where single-story structures exist. Creating a front porch, that is both welcoming to guests, and establishes a transition zone from public space to private space, is absent from this proposal. The proposed new unit has a street facing elevation that is for automobile use, and is not welcoming to pedestrians. Although setback further from the existing unit to allow for the required on-site parking, the proposed resulting residential duplex unit has a monolithic front elevation that is not contextual with the existing neighborhood from the standpoint of overall site planning or a relevant design aesthetic. Without a larger front porch on the existing unit, and no street facing entrance for the proposed two-story unit, there is little that is inviting or appealing about the Elm Street elevation of the resulting residential structure.

CD1.9 Building Design. A variety of attractive images will be achieved by encouraging a variety of building styles and designs, within a unifying context of consistent “pedestrian” scale along streets and compatibility among neighboring land uses.

The project does not adhere to this standard. There is no pedestrian scale to the proposed new unit, as the front elevation is designed for parking automobiles, and not about a transition zone from the public street to the private residence. This design also relegates access to the new front door of the proposed unit around the side of the main façade, tucked along the southern side yard elevation. Additionally, this proposed duplex is incongruous with streetscape of this block of Elm Street where single-story structures exist. Neighborhood incompatibility is created between the massing, and lack of site planning of the proposed duplex and single-family homes that exist along the 1600 block of Elm Street.

CD5.1 Design Review Process. Continue design review and approval process for all new development, changes, additions, and modifications of existing buildings (except for single-family homes on existing lots).

The project requires approval by the Design Review Board.
Pursuant to Section 19.38.060(A), Final Design Review Findings and Criteria, and (B) Design Review Criteria of the Zoning Ordinance, the Design Review Board may only approve a final design review if it finds that the application is consistent with the purposes of Section 19.38.060(A) and (B) and is consistent with these findings:

1. The applicable standards and requirements of this Zoning Ordinance;

   The project meets the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance, specifically Section 19.06.030 Development Standards. The project meets the general development standards in terms of height, setbacks, open space and parking.

2. The design policies of the General Plan and specific plans adopted by City Council;

   The project does not meet these standards. The proposed new two-story unit is attached to the existing one-story unit, and this creates a residential structure that is out of proportion to what exists on the site, and incongruous with streetscape of this block of Elm Street where single-stor structures exist. Creating a front porch, that is both welcoming to guests, and establishes a transition zone from public space to private space, is absent from this proposal. The proposed new unit has a street facing elevation that is for automobile use, and is not welcoming to pedestrians. Although setback further from the existing unit to allow for the required on-site parking, the proposed resulting residential duplex unit has a monolithic front elevation that is not contextual with the existing neighborhood from the standpoint of overall site planning or a relevant design aesthetic. Without a larger front porch on the existing unit, and no street facing entrance for the proposed two-story unit, there is little that is inviting or appealing about the Elm Street elevation of the resulting residential structure.

   Two types of materials (stucco and wood siding) and two colors are proposed for all of the building elevations to create some variety to the appearance of the resulting larger duplex residential structure. However, there is no pedestrian scale to the proposed new unit, as the front elevation is designed for parking automobiles, and not about a transition zone from the public street to the private residence. This design also relegates access to the new front door of the proposed unit around the side of the main façade, tucked along the southern side yard elevation. Additionally, this proposed duplex is incongruous with streetscape of this block of Elm Street where single-story structures exist. Neighborhood incompatibility is created between the massing, and lack of site planning of the proposed duplex and single-family homes that exist along the 1600 block of Elm Street.

3. Any applicable design guidelines adopted by the City Council;

   Other than the General Plan, there are no design guidelines adopted for this part of the City.

4. The design review criteria set forth in the following subsection;

   The project is in keeping with the design review criteria as outlined below (Section 19.38.060 of the El Cerrito Municipal Code). Please see below.

5. Any planning or zoning approvals by the Planning Commission or Zoning Administrator;

   The project does not require Planning Commission or Zoning Administrator approval.

6. Any other relevant policies or regulations of the City.

   No other City policies apply to this project.
Pursuant to Section 19.038.060 B, when conducting design review, the Design Review Board shall be guided by whether the project satisfies all applicable criteria, the policies of the General Plan's Community Design Element, and by any other policies or guidelines that may be adopted by the City Council for this purpose. Criteria listed below are specific criteria that, if applicable, all projects must satisfy for approval.

a. The aesthetic design, including its exterior design and landscaping, is appropriate to the function of the project and will provide an attractive and comfortable environment for occupants, visitors, and the general community.

While the project does have an acceptable landscape plan and incorporates different materials and finishes, it does not meet the finding.

The project consists of the addition of a new dwelling unit next to an existing dwelling unit on an existing site that was not initially created for two units. The new unit is added, but not integrated, onto the lot. Its bulk and massing creates a new residential structure that is lopsided in terms of bulk and massing. While staff is not opposed to two stories additions in this area, the massing of the new unit is not context sensitive to, and incongruous with, the streetscape of this block of Elm Street where single-story structures exist.

Without a larger front porch on the existing unit, and no street facing entrance for the proposed two-story unit, there is little that is inviting or appealing about the Elm Street elevation of the resulting residential structure.

Two types of materials (stucco and wood siding) and two colors are proposed for all of the building elevations and they do create some variety to the appearance of the resulting larger duplex residential structure.

b. Project details, colors, materials, and landscaping, are fully integrated with one another and used in a manner that is visually consistent with the proposed architectural design.

The project meets this finding in that the proposed new unit includes two types of materials (stucco and wood siding) and two colors are proposed for all of the building elevations to create some variety to the appearance of the resulting larger duplex residential structure.

The landscaping materials have also been revised – replacing petite oleander with French lavender for the new plant materials beneath the front elevation of the existing unit, and French lavender for the petite oleander, and Chinese pistache for the Chinese hackberry along the side yard (and southern) elevation for the proposed two-story unit. Similar substitutions of plant materials have been made for the southern side yard elevation of the proposed unit.

c. The project has been designed with consideration of neighboring development.

The project does not meet this finding. Its bulk and massing creates a new residential structure that is lopsided in terms of bulk and massing. While staff is not opposed to two stories additions in this area, the massing of the new unit is not context sensitive to, and incongruous with, the streetscape of this block of Elm Street where single-story structures exist.
d. The project contributes to the creation of an attractive and visually interesting built environment that includes well-articulated structures that present varied building facades, rooflines, and building heights and encourages increased pedestrian activity and transit use.

The project does not meet this standard. Its bulk and massing creates a new residential structure that is lopsided in terms of bulk and massing. While staff is not opposed to two stories additions in this area, the massing of the new unit is not context sensitive to, and incongruous with, the streetscape of this block of Elm Street where single-story structures exist.

Without a larger front porch on the existing unit, and no street facing entrance for the proposed two-story unit, there is little that is inviting or appealing about the Elm Street elevation of the resulting residential structure. There is little pedestrian scale to the proposed front facade, as most of the front elevation is for parking automobiles, and does not serve as a transition zone from the public street to the private residences.

e. Street frontages are attractive and interesting for pedestrians, address the street and provide for greater safety by allowing for surveillance of the street by people inside buildings and elsewhere.

The project does not meet the standard. Although setback further from the existing unit to allow for the required on-site parking, the proposed resulting residential duplex unit has a monolithic front elevation that is not contextual with the existing neighborhood from the standpoint of overall site planning or a relevant design aesthetic. There is no active surveillance by residents of the proposed new unit, as the first floor of this unit is for parking for both units; the master bedroom is above the garage, where there’s little ability for watching street activity. The existing unit has a proposed enlarged master bedroom at the front of the house where limited monitoring of street activity will occur.

Without a larger front porch on the existing unit, and no street facing entrance for the proposed two-story unit, there is little opportunity for monitoring activity on the street, as private bedrooms, and not public spaces such as living or family rooms, face Elm Street.

f. The proposed design is compatible with the historical or visual character of any area recognized by the City as having such character.

The project location is not in a historically or visually significant neighborhood of El Cerrito.

g. The aesthetic design preserves significant public views and vistas from public streets and open spaces and enhances them by providing areas for pedestrian activity.

There are no significant views from the project site.

h. The proposed landscaping plan is suitable for the type of project and will improve the appearance of the community by enhancing the building, minimizing hardscape and softening walls; and the landscape plan incorporates plant materials that are drought-tolerant, will minimize water usage, and are compatible with El Cerrito’s climate.

The project proposes new landscaping along the southern and eastern elevations. A small area of new landscaping is proposed along the northern elevation of the existing unit, at the rear of the building.
The project has been designed to be energy efficient including, but not limited to, landscape design and green or eco-friendly design and materials.

*The project is designed to be in compliance with the 2016 California Building Standards Code, which includes the California Green Code, and related Construction Codes. The proposed landscape design implements drought tolerant and climate specific species as part of this plan.*

j. The project design protects and integrates natural features including creeks, open space, significant vegetation, and geologic features. Projects along the Ohlone Greenway shall enhance the usability and aesthetic appeal of the Greenway by integrating it into the fabric of the City through building designs that include entries, yards, patios, and windows that open onto and face the Ohlone Greenway.

*There are no natural features on or adjacent to the subject lot.*

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends denying without prejudice Planning Application No. PL17-0021 to add a new two story addition to an existing single story single family residence, creating a duplex development on the lot.

**Proposed Motion**


**Appeal Period**

Within ten (10) working days after the date of the decision, the Design Review Board action may be appealed to the Planning Commission.

**Attachments**

1) Draft Resolution
2) June 7, 2017 Design Review Board meeting minutes
3) Revised plans dated January 3, 2018
ATTACHMENT 1

Design Review Board Resolution DR17-02

APPLICATION NO. PL17-0021

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF EL CERRITO DESIGN REVIEW BOARD DENYING WITHOUT PREJUDICE THE DESIGN REVIEW APPLICATION TO ADD A NEW TWO STORY ADDITION (2,619 SQUARE FEET) TO AN EXISTING SINGLE STORY SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCE, CREATING A DUPLEX AT 1613 ELM STREET PURSUANT TO SECTION 19.38.020 B. 2. B. OF THE EL CERRITO MUNICIPAL CODE

WHEREAS, on February 21, 2017 the applicant, Kevin Stong, submitted an application for Design Review to add a new two story addition (2,619 square feet) to an existing single story single family residence, creating a duplex development on the lot at a site located at 1613 Elm Street;

WHEREAS, the General Plan land use classification of the site is Medium Density Residential;

WHEREAS, the zoning district of the site is RD Duplex Residential;

WHEREAS, this project is not subject to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to Section 15270(a), projects which a public agency rejects or disapproves;

WHEREAS, the existing single family structure is 1,015 square feet and an addition of 145 square feet is proposed for a total of 1,160 square feet;

WHEREAS, the new duplex will be approximately 2,619 square feet;

WHEREAS, the project is subject to the following General Plan policies: LU1.2 Multi-family Neighborhoods, LU1.3 Quality of Development, CD1.3 High-Quality Design, CD1.9 Building Design, and CD 5.1 Design Review Process; and

WHEREAS, on February 7, 2018, the Design Review Board of El Cerrito, after due consideration of all evidence and reports offered for review, does find and determine the following pursuant to Sections 19.38.060(A) and 19.38.060(B), Final Design Review Findings and Criteria of the Zoning Ordinance, the Design Review Board must make the following findings in order to deny the project:

Findings:

1. The applicable standards and requirements of this Zoning Ordinance;

   That project meets the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance, specifically Section 19.96.030 Development Standards. The project meets the general development standards in terms of height, setbacks, open space and parking.

2. The design policies of the General Plan and specific plans adopted by City Council;

   The project does not meet these standards. The proposed new two-story unit is attached to the existing one-story unit, and this creates a residential structure that is out of proportion to what exists on the site, and incongruous with streetscape of this block of Elm Street where single-story structures exist. Creating a front porch, that is both welcoming to guests, and establishes a
transition zone from public space to private space, is absent from this proposal. The proposed new unit has a street facing elevation that is for automobile use, and is not welcoming to pedestrians. Although setback further from the existing unit to allow for the required on-site parking, the proposed resulting residential duplex unit has a monolithic front elevation that is not contextual with the existing neighborhood from the stand point of overall site planning or a relevant design aesthetic. Without a larger front porch on the existing unit, and no street facing entrance for the proposed two-story unit, there is little that is inviting or appealing about the Elm Street elevation of the resulting residential structure.

Two types of materials (stucco and wood siding) and two colors are proposed for all of the building elevations to create some variety to the appearance of the resulting larger duplex residential structure. However, there is no pedestrian scale to the proposed new unit, as the front elevation is designed for parking automobiles, and not about a transition zone from the public street to the private residence. This design also relegates access to the new front door of the proposed unit around the side of the main façade, tucked along the southern side yard elevation. Additionally, this proposed duplex is incongruous with streetscape of this block of Elm Street where single-story structures exist. Neighborhood incompatibility is created between the massing, and lack of site planning of the proposed duplex and single-family homes that exist along the 1600 block of Elm Street.

3. Any applicable design guidelines adopted by the City Council;

*Other than the General Plan, there are no design guidelines adopted for this part of the City.*

4. The design review criteria set forth in the following subsection;

*The project is not in keeping with the design review criteria as outlined below (Section 19.38.060 of the El Cerrito Municipal Code). Please see below.*

5. Any planning or zoning approvals by the Planning Commission or Zoning Administrator;

*The project does not require Planning Commission or Zoning Administrator approval.*

6. Any other relevant policies or regulations of the City.

*No other City policies apply to this project.*

Pursuant to Section 19.038.060 B, when conducting design review, the Design Review Board shall be guided by whether the project satisfies all applicable criteria, the policies of the General Plan's Community Design Element, and by any other policies or guidelines that may be adopted by the City Council for this purpose. Criteria listed below are specific criteria that, if applicable, all projects must satisfy for approval.

a. The aesthetic design, including its exterior design and landscaping, is appropriate to the function of the project and will provide an attractive and comfortable environment for occupants, visitors, and the general community.

*While the project does have an acceptable landscape plan and incorporates different materials and finishes, it does not meet the finding.*
The project consists of the addition of a new dwelling unit next to an existing dwelling unit on an existing site that was not initially created for two units. The new unit is added, but not integrated, onto the lot. Its bulk and massing creates a new residential structure that is lopsided in terms of bulk and massing. While staff is not opposed to two stories additions in this area, the massing of the new unit is not context sensitive to, and incongruous with, the streetscape of this block of Elm Street where single-story structures exist.

Without a larger front porch on the existing unit, and no street facing entrance for the proposed two-story unit, there is little that is inviting or appealing about the Elm Street elevation of the resulting residential structure.

Two types of materials (stucco and wood siding) and two colors are proposed for all of the building elevations and they do create some variety to the appearance of the resulting larger duplex residential structure.

Project details, colors, materials, and landscaping, are fully integrated with one another and used in a manner that is visually consistent with the proposed architectural design.

The project meets this finding in that the proposed new unit includes two types of materials (stucco and wood siding) and two colors are proposed for all of the building elevations to create some variety to the appearance of the resulting larger duplex residential structure.

The landscaping materials have also been revised – replacing petite oleander with French lavender for the new plant materials beneath the front elevation of the existing unit, and French lavender for the petite oleander, and Chinese pistache for the Chinese hackberry along the side yard (and southern) elevation for the proposed two-story unit. Similar substitutions of plant materials have been made for the southern side yard elevation of the proposed unit.

c. The project has been designed with consideration of neighboring development.

The project does not meet this finding. Its bulk and massing creates a new residential structure that is lopsided in terms of bulk and massing. While staff is not opposed to two stories additions in this area, the massing of the new unit is not context sensitive to, and incongruous with, the streetscape of this block of Elm Street where single-story structures exist.

d. The project contributes to the creation of an attractive and visually interesting built environment that includes well-articulated structures that present varied building facades, rooflines, and building heights and encourages increased pedestrian activity and transit use.

The project does not meet this standard. Its bulk and massing creates a new residential structure that is lopsided in terms of bulk and massing. While staff is not opposed to two stories additions in this area, the massing of the new unit is not context sensitive to, and incongruous with, the streetscape of this block of Elm Street where single-story structures exist.

Without a larger front porch on the existing unit, and no street facing entrance for the proposed two-story unit, there is little that is inviting or appealing about the Elm Street elevation of the resulting residential structure. There is little pedestrian scale to the proposed front facade, as most
of the front elevation is for parking automobiles, and does not serve as a transition zone from the public street to the private residences.

c. Street frontages are attractive and interesting for pedestrians, address the street and provide for greater safety by allowing for surveillance of the street by people inside buildings and elsewhere.

The project does not meet the standard. Although setback further from the existing unit to allow for the required on-site parking, the proposed resulting residential duplex unit has a monolithic front elevation that is not contextual with the existing neighborhood from the standpoint of overall site planning or a relevant design aesthetic. There is no active surveillance by residents of the proposed new unit, as the first floor of this unit is for parking for both units; the master bedroom is above the garage, where there's little ability for watching street activity. The existing unit has a proposed enlarged master bedroom at the front of the house where limited monitoring of street activity will occur.

Without a larger front porch on the existing unit, and no street facing entrance for the proposed two-story unit, there is little opportunity for monitoring activity on the street, as private bedrooms, and not public spaces such as living or family rooms, face Elm Street.

f. The proposed design is compatible with the historical or visual character of any area recognized by the City as having such character.

The project location is not in a historically or visually significant neighborhood of El Cerrito.

g. The aesthetic design preserves significant public views and vistas from public streets and open spaces and enhances them by providing areas for pedestrian activity.

There are no significant views from the project site.

h. The proposed landscaping plan is suitable for the type of project and will improve the appearance of the community by enhancing the building, minimizing hardscape and softening walls; and the landscape plan incorporates plant materials that are drought-tolerant, will minimize water usage, and are compatible with El Cerrito's climate.

The project proposes new landscaping along the southern and eastern elevations. A small area of new landscaping is proposed along the northern elevation of the existing unit, at the rear of the building.

i. The project has been designed to be energy efficient including, but not limited to, landscape design and green or eco-friendly design and materials.

The project is designed to be in compliance with the 2016 California Building Standards Code, which includes the California Green Code, and related Construction Codes. The proposed landscape design implements drought tolerant and climate specific species as part of this plan.
j. The project design protects and integrates natural features including creeks, open space, significant vegetation, and geologic features. Projects along the Ohlone Greenway shall enhance the usability and aesthetic appeal of the Greenway by integrating it into the fabric of the City through building designs that include entries, yards, patios, and windows that open onto and face the Ohlone Greenway.

There are no natural features on or adjacent to the subject lot.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that after careful consideration of maps, facts, exhibits, correspondence, and testimony, and other evidence submitted in this matter, and, in consideration of the findings, the El Cerrito Design Review Board hereby denies without prejudice Application No. PL17-0021.

CERTIFICATION

I CERTIFY that this resolution was adopted by the El Cerrito Design Review Board at a regular meeting held on February 7, 2018, upon motion of Boardmember , second by Boardmember .

AYES:
NOES:
ABSTAIN:
ABSENT:

Elizabeth Dunn, AICP
Consulting Planner
M I N U T E S

R E G U L A R  M E E T I N G
O F  T H E
D E S I G N  R E V I E W  B O A R D

Wednesday, June 7, 2017
7:30 PM
El Cerrito City Hall
City Hall Council Chambers
10890 San Pablo Avenue

R o l l  C a l l :  C h a i r  J o h n  T h o m p s o n ;  B o a r d  M e m b e r s :  C a r l  G r o c h ,  M a g g i e  L e i g h l y ,  G l e n n  W o o d  a n d
P a t r i c k  R i l e y .

1. C o m m e n t s  f r o m  t h e  P u b l i c
   There were no comments from the public.

2. C i t y  C o u n c i l  L i a i s o n  R e p o r t
   Councilmember Rochelle Pardue-Okimoto reported on the letter of opposition of the jail extension,
marijuana dispensaries, improving recreation facilities, City Budget, and the library

3. A p p r o v a l  o f  M i n u t e s
   Motion to approve the March 1, 2017 meeting minutes: Thompson 2nd. Leighly
   V o t e :
   Yes: Thompson, Wood, Groch, Leighly
   Noes: None
   Abstain: Riley
   Absent: None

4. B o a r d  M e m b e r  C o m m u n i c a t i o n / C o n f l i c t  o f  I n t e r e s t  D i s c l o s u r e
   Nothing was reported.

5. P u b l i c  H e a r i n g  – 1613 Elm Street - Design Review
   Application: PL17-0021
   Applicant: Kevin Stong
   Location: 1613 Elm Street
   APN: 502-211-012
   Zoning: RD (Duplex Residential)
   General Plan: Medium Density Residential
   Request: Design Review Board consideration of a Design Review application to add a
   new two story addition (1,354 square feet) to an existing single story single

C O M M U N I C A T I O N  A C C E S S  I N F O R M A T I O N
To request a meeting agenda in large print, Braille, or on cassette, or to request a sign language interpreter
for the meeting, call Noel Ibailio, Staff Liaison at (510) 215-4330 (voice) at least FIVE (5) WORKING DAYS
NOTICE PRIOR TO THE MEETING to ensure availability.

10890 San Pablo Avenue, El Cerrito, CA 94530  Tel: (510) 215-4330
E-mail: nibailio@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us
family residence, creating a duplex development on the lot (Section 19.33.020 F. 2. b. of the El Cerrito Municipal Code).

CEQA: Categorically Exempt, Section 15301: Existing Facilities

Senior planner, Noel M. Ibalio, presented the case and answered questions of the Board members.

The architect, Kevin Stong, presented the design and answered questions from the Board.

The Board gave suggestions to Mr. Stong and recommended continuing the case to a date uncertain.

Motion to continue the case to a date uncertain: Wood; 2nd: Thompson

Vote
Yes: Thompson, Wood, Groch, Leighly, Riley
Noes: None
Abstain: None
Absent: None

6. Staff Communications
Senior Planner Noel Ibalio reported that the ADU ordinance was approved by the Council.
Development Services Manager, Margaret Kavanaugh-Lynch, reported that the Specific Plan is nearing its development buildout in terms of residential units.

7. Adjournment
9:00 p.m.