

**OFFICIAL MINUTES
MONTEREY PARK DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
FEBRUARY 18, 2014**

The Design Review Board of the City of Monterey Park held a Regular Meeting of the Board in the Council Chambers, located at 320 West Newmark Avenue in the City of Monterey Park, Tuesday, February 18, 2014 at 7:08 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Hamner called the Design Review Board meeting to order at 7:08 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Planner Luna called the roll:

Board Members Present: Chair Krystal Hamner, Vice-Chair Roy Furuto, Members Allen Wong, and Billy Yeung

ALSO PRESENT: Michael Huntley, Community and Economic Development Director; Harald Luna, Assistant Planner

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

December 3, 2013

Chair Hamner requested comments from different Board Members to be recorded in future minutes.

Action Taken: The Board approved the minutes from the regular meeting of December 3, 2013.

Motion: Moved by Vice-Chair Furuto and seconded by Board Member Wong, motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Board Members: Hamner, Furuto, Wong
Noes: Board Members: None
Absent: Board Members: None
Abstain: Board Members: Yeung

December 17, 2013

Action Taken: The Board approved the minutes from the regular meeting of December 17, 2013.

Motion: Moved by Board Member Wong and seconded by Vice-Chair Furuto, motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Board Members: Hamner, Furuto, Wong
Noes: Board Members: None
Absent: Board Members: None
Abstain: Board Members: Yeung

ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS: None

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

1. 718 HERSHEY AVENUE – CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW 2-STORY SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DWELLING WITH AN ATTACHED 2-CAR GARAGE, AND ACCESSORY DETACHED STORAGE STRUCTURE (DRB-13-42)

The applicant, James Hu, is requesting approval for the construction of a new 2-story single-family residential dwelling with an attached 2-car garage, and accessory detached storage structure at 718 Hershey Avenue in the R-2 (Medium-Multiple-Family Residential) Zone.

Planner Luna presented the staff report. Chair Hamner inquired the location of the planter that is indicated on the condition of approval, and Planner Luna replied that the planter is located within the front setback area along the west property line between the driveway and west property line. Vice-Chair Furuto inquired the typical depth of the planter required by the City. Planner Luna replied that per the Code minimum landscape strip width is 3 feet, and since the driveway is shifting he suggested a 6-foot 6-inch wide planter in this case. Vice-Chair Furuto inquired the reason why the storage is proposed there. Planner Luna replied that the applicant can answer this question later. Vice-Chair Furuto expressed his concern regarding the 6-inch wide landscape strip and rear yard concrete pavement. Planner Luna stated that there is no requirement for the landscape area within the Code, and suggested to discuss this issue with the applicant. The applicant stated that the lot is narrow and it has a frontage with less than 50 feet, and they have a 5 foot setback area, within which they intend to propose a 4-foot walkway, a 6-inch concrete block wall and a 6-inch landscape strip. The applicant also talked about the concrete pavement, which basically reflects the existing concrete rear yard area.

Member Yeung inquired the reason why the stone finish discontinued on the east elevation. The applicant replied that since the house is only 5 feet away from the property line, east elevation can barely be seen from the street. Member Yeung inquired whether the front yard landscaping is new, and the applicant replied that the front yard lawn would be replaced with the new landscaping.

Member Wong inquired the way to relocate the trees in the yard, and the applicant replied that the house is designed in a way that trees would be kept as is so they would not need to relocate the trees.

Chair Hamner suggested to the applicant to consider concrete lattice pavers along the side yard if they want to have both the walkway and landscape. Chair Hamner commented that the design of the house is very efficient in a way that there is little dead space or transition area, but probably future buyers may not like the design. The applicant stated that the project is challenging since the lot is narrow and that they don't want to touch the trees in the yard.

Action Taken: The Board Approved the Conditions of Approval as stated in the staff report.

Motion: Moved by Board Member Wong and seconded by Board Member Yeung, motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Board Members: Hamner, Furuto, Wong, Yeung
Noes: Board Members: None
Absent: Board Members: None
Abstain: Board Members: None

ITEMS FROM THE BOARD:

2. A REQUEST FROM THE CHAIR HAMNER TO DISCUSS THE SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DESIGN REVIEW BOARD APPLICATION AND OTHER RELATED ITEMS

Chair Hamner stated that the Board is given a package before the meeting so that the Board Members can review the project beforehand, but as tonight's package, the applicant didn't provide photos showing the property across the street, which are requested by the submittal instructions. Chair Hamner inquired the process for Planner to review the submittal. Planner Luna replied that staff does an informal review at the counter. Planner Luna further explained to the Board that he informs the applicants about the DRB purpose and process first, then usually takes in the applicant's plans for an informal review and call the applicant back for revisions, after which the applicant would do the formal submission. Chair Hamner inquired Planner Luna if he takes photos for the surrounding properties himself, and Planner Luna replied yes, stating that in order to make a better site analysis he takes photographs of subject property and surrounding area. Director Huntley further explained that Staff is requested to visit the site for better understanding of the surrounding neighborhood and adjoining properties when they are processing projects.

Chair Hamner stated that the applicant needs to finish their due diligence such as taking photos for surrounding properties. Chair Hamner inquired what if the applicant submits an incomplete package and insists to go to the meeting. Planner Luna

replied that he would mail a letter of incompleteness to the applicant if anything is missing from the package, and the letter would request a complete submission and indicate required corrections to the plans. Vice-Chair Furuto stated that the Board would like to see a complete package of submission. Planner Luna stated that he informs the applicant before scheduling the case to the DRB meeting, there are certain processes to go through, and including Planner's reviewing the project and the applicant's revision. Chair Hamner stated that the City Council would like to be more business-friendly and expedite projects during process, and that having the applicant submit everything listed on the checklist would help them to save time in the process. Chair Hamner commented that Planner Luna did a good job in preparing everything that is requested before the meeting. Director Huntley stated that Planner Luna pays close attention to prepare cases and address issues with the applicant beforehand so that the Board would see a better prepared application during the meeting.

Vice-Chair Furuto suggested adding a note to the submittal request stating that incomplete submittals would not be processed. Vice-Chair Furuto commented that for many sign applications, the application package is usually incomplete, such as with no site plan, sign plans not drawn to scale, or words being too small to read. Planner Luna stated that for the following sign application he would address these issues with applicants. Vice-Chair Furuto also commented on the checklist sheet in DRB submission package that, the requested minimum size for signs, landscape, photos, and site plan should be at least 11" by 17". He also suggested including the applicant's email address on Application Form. Director Huntley stated that the City would have a new website in about two and half months, and that he might propose to show sample submittals and sample applications to applicants on the new website if that's possible. The Board supported the idea.

Chair Hamner stated that the Code is not detailed enough in terms what design can be accepted by the City, and she commented on a previous application submission that the second time submission was the same with the first time. She stated that she approved that project because the addition is located to the rear of the house but she still has an issue with the roof. Vice-Chair Furuto stated that the Code is easy to use and understand compared to some other city codes. Director Huntley pointed out that per the Zoning Code Design Review Board should mainly focus on parts that are visible from streets or neighboring properties. He talked about the value of the Board, stating that conditions of approval would add value to the property itself and surrounding neighborhood.

Director Huntley raised the discussion of compatibility, and asked what elements the Board would like to preserve in the neighborhood. Chair Hamner stated that certain architectural elements on houses should be maintained, and she suggested pointing out the character of surrounding neighborhood and utilizing some elements on new projects, so that new projects would be compatible with the existing block.

Chair Hamner raised the question of water lines regarding the previous house addition project, which is located in a neighborhood that already had a water

pressure problem. Director Huntley replied that they can inform this issue to the applicant, and that during plan check the property would be requested to upgrade the water meter and water lines, and there would be a water impact fee associated with the addition.

ITEMS FROM STAFF: None

ADJOURNMENT:

The Design Review Board adjourned the meeting at 8:06 p.m. on February 18, 2014, until the next regularly scheduled meeting on March 4, 2014, at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

Michael Huntley
Director of Community and Economic Development