

**TOWN OF MORAGA
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD MEETING
MINUTES**

March 26, 2012

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

A regular meeting of the Design Review Board (DRB) was called to order by Chairman Sayles at 7:00 P.M. in the Moraga Library Meeting Room, 1500 St. Mary's Road, Moraga, California.

A. Present: Boardmember Kirkpatrick, Chair Sayles, Boardmember Zhu
Absent: Boardmember Escano-Thompson
Staff: Shawna Brekke-Read, Planning Director
Kelly Suronen, Assistant Planner

B. Conflict of Interest

There was no reported conflict of interest.

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no comments from the public.

III. PLANNING COMMISSION LIAISON REPORT - Commissioner Kuckuk

Commissioner Kuckuk reported that at their March 19, 2012 meeting, the Planning Commission had a training session on the public hearing process, the development review process, and the environmental review process. They also had a round table discussion on how to get the best support from staff and how to be prepared for meetings. At their March 5, 2012 meeting, the Commission approved a conditional use permit for a frozen yogurt shop and reviewed the mitigated negative declaration for the proposed home at 1800 Donald Drive.

IV. ADOPTION OF MEETING AGENDA

On motion by Boardmember Kirkpatrick, seconded by Boardmember Zhu to adopt the meeting agenda, as presented.

V. DESIGN REVIEW

A. UP 01-2012 – May Lo (Applicant), Kimco Realty (Owner), 384 Park Street: Application for approval of two lighted signs and exterior building color changes for a frozen yogurt store at the Rheem Shopping Center. Zone: Community Commercial (CC), APN 255-150-015.

Assistant Planner Kelly Suronen reported that the applicant was proposing two lighted signs for the recently approved frozen yogurt shop. Illuminated halo letters were proposed for the Tangelo sign on the canopy beam and conformed

to the sign program for minor tenants in the Rheem Shopping Center. Since halo signs were costly and not effective at night, staff suggested the applicant consider erecting 8-inch tall non-illuminated gold letters and 4-inch tall white letters below. The DRB would need to determine whether the illuminated window sign was complimentary to the overall design of the shop and other signs in the center. The storefront would be painted in colors similar to the nearby Shish Kabob Show restaurant. Staff recommended approval of the project.

May Lo, 50 Warfield Drive, introduced herself as the applicant for the frozen yogurt store. The existing beige storefront blended in with the other stores. In order to establish presence in the center, she wanted the shop to have strong, contrasting colors. To maintain the brownish tone of the area, she proposed dark brown for the storefront and a copper rust color for the entry door. Since the store was located in a corner, set back from other stores, and blocked by a planter, the signage and color contrast would help attract customers.

Boardmember Kirkpatrick had no issue with the proposed storefront colors and thought the existing beige color was dreary looking. He asked if the applicant had considered the alternative sign option for the front beam as suggested by staff.

Ms. Lo said that she had considered the 8-inch and 4-inch letter sign option since the majority of tenants had that type of sign. She thought it was small and did not read very well. She did not mind paying more for a larger sign.

Boardmember Kirkpatrick wanted to know if the back door would be used for public access.

Ms. Lo confirmed that the shop would have two entrances. In addition to the entry door at the front, there would be an entrance at the back. No signage was proposed at the back except for a small logo on the glass door.

Boardmember Kirkpatrick asked if the applicant was going to install a blade sign under the overhang.

Ms. Lo said she wanted to hang a blade sign but was still coming up with the design.

Boardmember Kirkpatrick inquired as to how staff would handle the blade sign.

Ms. Suronen stated that staff could approve the blade sign over the counter since it was a sign allowed by sign program for the Rheem Center and would not be visible from the scenic corridor.

Chair Sayles wanted to make sure the applicant was satisfied with what was being proposed.

Ms. Lo felt comfortable with the proposed signage. The halo and window signs seemed sufficient.

Boardmember Kirkpatrick agreed with the applicant in that the location of the store was sheltered. He saw the need for an illuminated window sign and thought it would benefit the business. Other businesses had neon signs which only indicated if the store was open or closed. The Tangelo window sign would identify the business and inform passersby that it was open.

Boardmember Zhu was not opposed to the signage or the exterior colors. He said his children would be excited about the new frozen yogurt shop.

Chair Sayles thought the proposal was reasonable and believed the Town's Sign Ordinance was too restrictive.

On motion by Boardmember Zhu, seconded by Boardmember Kirkpatrick and carried unanimously to adopt the Draft Action Memo dated March 26, 2012 approving UP 01-12 for May Lo at 384 Park Street, subject to the findings and conditions as presented.

Chair Sayles identified the ten day right of appeal to the Planning Commission.

- B. DRB 11-2010 – Town of Moraga (Applicant/Owner), 1425 St. Mary's Road:** Application for approval of a parking lot with 29 parking spaces south of the skate board facility at Moraga Commons Park between the existing bike path and the east side of Moraga Road. 14 trees would be removed and an 11-foot wide planting strip with 8 new trees would be installed between the parking and Moraga Road. The application includes grading for excavation of 700 cubic yards to install road base for the parking lot. Zone: Open Space (OS-M), APN 256-110-057.

Ms. Suronen reported that the DRB had looked at the preliminary plan for the skate board parking lot back in November of 2010 and that it was back before them for approval of the final plan. She explained that the revised 75 degree parking angle allowed for a 24-foot wide driveway and a wider landscaped island between Moraga Road and the parking lot. The plans had been reviewed by Frank Kennedy, Town Engineer, who indicated that the plans could proceed with design review. A grading permit was required because the grading would be more than 50 cubic yards and would cover an area over 10,000 square feet. 12 trees would be removed for construction of the parking lot. The DRB would need to approve a tree removal permit because the trees were native and visible from the Moraga scenic corridor. 14 replacement trees would be planted. Staff recommended approval of the grading and final plans for the project.

Planning Director Shawna Brekke-Read added that the arborist report had found root fungus on a number of the trees. Removal of the trees was recommended whether or not the parking lot was built.

Jay Ingram, Parks and Recreation Director, briefly stated that the project had been professionally designed by MacKay & Soms, an engineering firm that had been selected by the Town Council last year.

Chris Gunther, MacKay & Soms Civil Engineers, explained that the Town had done most of the preliminary work before the firm picked up the project. The firm had simply implemented the policies that were already established. Most of the design was the same except for the expanded landscape strip. They also introduced a bio-retention swale in that area to filter the rainwater before it entered the storm drain system and the adjacent creek in order to comply with the latest requirements for the Regional Water Quality Control Board. A landscape designer refined the landscape design and plant selection.

Boardmember Kirkpatrick asked about the general grading and finished cross slope. He wanted to know if a 3 to 1 slope would be maintained if there was a cut into the area off the path.

Mr. Gunther replied that they maintained the slope as close as possible. Due to the width of the parking lot they were able to conform to the existing trail without having to make any major cuts or fills.

Boardmember Kirkpatrick wondered if the applicant was comfortable with the 1% cross slope in the pavement.

Mr. Gunther said it was difficult to do a 1% cross slope. There would be a concrete edge on the west side as well as a concrete edge adjacent to the bio-swale. By having those two concrete edges and putting asphalt between those locations the cross slope was doable and he was comfortable with it.

Boardmember Kirkpatrick was concerned about bird baths in the pavement. He knew it was a restricted area within to work.

Mr. Gunther understood and said that he could take a closer look at the design.

Boardmember Kirkpatrick suggested grade control or blue top. It was important to do paving correctly; otherwise it could result in unwanted bird baths.

Boardmember Zhu recalled neighbors who had been concerned people using their driveways in order to turn around on Moraga Road. He raised the issue of safety with regards to turning left onto Moraga Road from the parking lot exit.

Mr. Gunther stated that visibility would not be an issue for cars exiting the parking lot onto Moraga Road since there was enough site distance in either direction.

Chair Sayles inquired about the landscaping.

Mr. Gunther noted that the drought tolerant plants had been previously selected by the DRB. There would be a landscape strip directly adjacent to the roadway and landscaping next to the cedar rail by the trail which included low plants and shrubs. Trees, bushes and shrubs would be adjacent to the roadway. The landscaping to south would include the existing redwood trees and 47 new star jasmine plants.

Chair Sayles wanted to know the canopy height of the larger trees and bushes.

Mr. Gunther was unaware of the canopy height but recalled the need to keep the plants low in order to maintain visibility in that area.

Boardmember Kirkpatrick confirmed that a standard curb and gutter with pressed areas for the water to go through would be used.

Mr. Gunther confirmed that a standard curb and gutter would be used with cut outs for the water. There would be enough slope so that debris would not gather in between the cutouts.

Boardmember Kirkpatrick asked if there would be one cut out per parking bay.

Mr. Gunther said that they would do a cut out for every other parking bay.

Chair Sayles questioned the possibility of a two percent cross slope.

Mr. Gunther explained that a two percent slope would increase excavation, create a channel in the bio-retention cell area, and modify the entrance and exit of the lot. The parking lot would be lower than the adjacent roadway and cars would experience a bump effect when exiting the lot. Water running off the hill needed to go where it had always gone which was out toward Moraga Road and down to the drainage system down the roadway.

Chair Sayles asked if they were bringing hillside water across the parking lot.

Mr. Gunther explained that when hillside water was not intercepted by the drain during large storms it ran down the hill to Moraga Road. They did not want to build a curb to block that natural flow of drainage.

Boardmember Kirkpatrick asked if the daylight point across the trail was flush with the road.

Mr. Gunther replied that they were holding the existing grades along the trail and avoiding existing grades adjacent to the road.

Boardmember Kirkpatrick asked if there were any concentrated areas of water.

Mr. Gunther reported that none were observed in the field. A blue top could be required in the specifications to maintain a proper cross slope.

Boardmember Kirkpatrick agreed with staff's recommendation of planting 15 gallon trees. He requested a condition that controlled the grading for the cross slope. He recommended the addition of language to condition #1, as follows:

Any significant changes to the grading plans for the excavation necessary under the new parking lot at Moraga Commons Park shall be subject to further Design Review Board approval. The final grading for pavement shall be established through a blue top installation in order that the inspector can verify the one percent (1%) grading.

Chair Sayles thought the best thing about the project was the elimination of the redwood trees. They were a liability.

On motion by Boardmember Kirkpatrick, seconded by Boardmember Zhu, and carried unanimously to adopt the Draft Action Memo dated March 26, 2012 approving DRB 11-10 for the Town of Moraga at 1425 St. Mary's Road, subject to the findings and conditions as shown and as modified.

Chair Sayles identified the ten day right of appeal to the Planning Commission.

VI. REPORTS

A. There were no Boardmember reports.

B. Staff

Ms. Brekke-Read reported that the Town had an active application with Signature Homes for a residential development on the former bowling alley site. The applicant wanted feedback on the project from both the Planning Commission and the Design Review Board. She explained that a joint meeting had been requested. No action would be taken; it would be an opportunity for both bodies to get together and to provide comments and direction.

Chair Sayles said he would participate in the joint meeting with Signature Homes if it was a study session and no action was being taken; otherwise he would have to recuse himself since he owned the adjoining property.

Ms. Brekke-Read informed the DRB that the Hetfield Final EIR would be available on Friday and that the Commission would consider it at their April 2nd meeting. Upcoming agenda items included a grading permit for the East Bay Regional Communication Systems radio tower at the top of Alta Mesa Drive. She concluded that Richard Chamberlain had retired and that the Planning Department would be replacing his position.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

On motion by Boardmember Kirkpatrick, seconded by Boardmember Zhu, to adjourn the meeting at approximately 8:00 P.M. to a regular meeting of the DRB on Monday, April 9, 2012 at 7:00 P.M. in the Moraga Library Meeting Room located at 1500 St. Mary's Road, Moraga, CA 94556.

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Secretary of the Planning Commission