

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

**June 22, 2015**

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

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

Present: Boardmembers Escano-Thompson, Crews, Glover, Zhu, Chair Helber

Absent: None

Staff: Ella Samonsky, Associate Planner  
Brian Horn, Associate Planner

**A. Conflict of Interest**

There was no reported Conflict of Interest.

**B. Contact with Applicants**

Chair Helber reported that as the DRB Subcommittee, he and Boardmember Zhu had met with the applicants for 63 Vista Encinos to review the home design. The Subcommittee had also seen the home design for 288 Sandringham North. As part of that process, he had driven up Sandringham Drive to view the property at 288 Sandringham and had spoken to a neighbor who lived across the street.

**2. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Scott Bowhay, 1671 Camino Pablo, Moraga, expressed concern that the minutes of the DRB and Planning Commission meetings for several dates from 2014 and 2015 had not been posted on the Town's website, and he asked how the public would be informed absent that posting. He provided a list of the meeting dates to the DRB for the record.

**3. ADOPTION OF CONSENT AGENDA**

**A. May 26, 2015 Minutes**

**B. Adoption of Meeting Agenda**

On motion by Boardmember Escano-Thompson, seconded by Boardmember Glover to adopt the Consent Agenda, as shown. The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Escano-Thompson, Crews, Glover, Zhu, Helber  
Noes: None

Abstain: None  
Absent: None

#### 4. DESIGN REVIEW

##### A. 348 Rheem Boulevard

Applicant: Grace Healthcare of Moraga, 348 Rheem Boulevard, Moraga, CA 94556

Design Review (DRB 21-14) to Install One Non-Illuminated Monument Sign (SO, ENS)

Associate Planner Ella Samonsky presented the staff report dated June 22, 2015, to install one non-illuminated sign at 348 Rheem Boulevard for Grace Healthcare. Due to the project's consistency with the Design Guidelines, Zoning Ordinance, and General Plan, with minimal impact to surrounding properties, she recommended that the DRB approve the Draft Action Memorandum dated June 22, 2015, approving DRB 21-14 pursuant to Moraga Municipal Code (MMC) Section 8.88.060-C.1, subject to findings and conditions of approval.

Responding to the DRB, Ms. Samonsky affirmed that a condition could be added that would require the removal of the old sign upon installation of the new sign. She also clarified that the sign would be doubled sided, would have the same design on each side, and that no lighting had been proposed as part of the project.

#### PUBLIC COMMENTS OPENED

Alex Webster, West Coast Sign, 1437 Herndon Avenue, Concord, offered samples of the proposed faux stone material to be used on the two columns of the sign structure, which would consist of high density foam, and which would be resistant to breaking. The new sign would provide an updated sign for Grace Healthcare and the old sign would be removed prior to the installation of the new sign.

#### PUBLIC COMMENTS CLOSED

In response to the DRB, Mr. Webster clarified that the sign would be one solid piece, painted with a plastic coating, pre-manufactured in one piece, durable, and unbreakable. The sign and colors would have a 10-year warranty. He had experienced no problems with the material or fading of colors, although the signs with that material he had installed had not yet aged beyond the 10-year warranty period.

Boardmember Zhu expressed concern with the proposed faux stone material and was uncertain of its durability. He wanted to see the condition of the material after 10 years.

Mr. Webster reiterated that the material would have a 10-year warranty period. If the sign needed to be updated after that period, it would be up to Grace Healthcare to repaint the sign or address its condition. He was confident the sign would be acceptable within the warranty period.

Boardmember Glover inquired of the cost differential between the faux stone materials and real stone.

Mr. Webster suggested the cost could be 40 percent more if made of actual stone. He reiterated that the faux stone, foam material would not fall off, as would real stones, which over time, would loosen and fall off the cement board, and the proposed material would appear better over 10 years.

In response to Boardmember Zhu, Ms. Samonsky identified Condition 7, which would require the monument sign to be maintained and kept in a safe and secure condition at all times.

Mr. Webster further clarified that the sign would not, and could not, be illuminated due to location. Indirect lighting had also not been proposed.

Ms. Samonsky affirmed that given the scenic corridor, any proposal for lighting for the sign in the future would require DRB review and approval.

On motion by Boardmember Glover, seconded by Boardmember Zhu, to adopt the Draft Action Memorandum dated June 22, 2015, approving DRB 21-14 for 348 Rheem Boulevard, subject to the findings and conditions, as shown, and subject to an additional condition that the existing sign located at 348 Rheem Boulevard would be removed upon completion of the project as permitted. The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes:	Escano-Thompson, Crews, Glover, Zhu, Helber
Noes:	None
Abstain:	None
Absent:	None

Chair Helber identified the 10-day appeal period of a decision of the Design Review Board in writing to the Town Clerk subject to an applicable appeal fee.

**B. 65 Vista Encinos**

**Applicant:** Branagh Development, 100 School Street, Danville, CA 94526  
Design Review (DRB 05-15) for the Construction of a New 4,054 square foot Stepped, Split Level Two-Story Single-Family Residence with a 509 Square Foot Attached Two-Car Garage (3 DUA, BH)

Associate Planner Brian Horn presented the staff report dated June 22, 2015 for design review for the construction of a new 4,054 square foot, stepped, split level, two-story, single-family residence with a 509 square foot attached two-car garage located at 65 Vista Encinos. He clarified that the aggregate building height would be 39 feet, not the 49 feet shown in the power point presentation. He recommended that the DRB approve the Draft Action Memorandum dated June 22, 2015 approving DRB 05-15, subject to findings and conditions of approval.

Mr. Horn provided a status report of the DRB Subcommittee meeting that had been held with the applicant to review revised plans in response to the DRB's comments during its May 26, 2015 meeting, at which time the DRB had reviewed plans for the home located

at 63 Vista Encinos. The applicant had made the following revisions to the front portion of the home: lowered the floor plate height by two feet; wainscoting on the front would consist of a stone material to break up the massing; and the architectural details for the home had been discussed and the roof pitch had been lowered approximately one foot.

Boardmember Zhu, a member of the DRB Subcommittee, acknowledged that the home at 63 Vista Encinos had been lowered approximately three feet and the roof pitch had been lowered at least 12 inches.

## PUBLIC COMMENTS OPENED

Bob Pickett, Senior Development Associate, Branagh Development, 100 School Street, Danville, CA 94526, presented a rendering for Lot 7, explained that Branagh Development had entered into a relationship with the property owner to build out the homes on the project and planned to build four homes, and the application was for the second of the four homes to be considered. Applications had been submitted for Lots 4 and 5. He commented that this was as far as the developer planned to go at this time, after which depending upon the market; the developer would evaluate whether to move forward with additional homes. He acknowledged that the Town's Design Guidelines for two-story homes, which prohibited more than two, two-story homes in a row, had created some design challenges for the developer.

Mr. Pickett stated he was comfortable with the staff recommendation and conditions, although he clarified that an area described as a covered loggia was open to the exterior area located between the retaining wall and the rear of the home, with a large patio in the front. As a result, there would be a lot of outdoor space and he suggested an exception was not needed from the Design Guidelines for required outdoor space.

Mr. Pickett also reported that during the DRB Subcommittee meeting, the developer had been able to incorporate some suggestions from the DRB for Lot 8, which would have a similar floor plan as the other homes. He clarified that the exhibit provided to the DRB at this time did not show those changes which would be described by the project architect.

Ron Jones, Hunt, Hale, Jones Architects, 444 Spear Street, Suite 105, San Francisco, CA, 94105, explained that there had been a working session with staff and the development team to review Lot 8. He described the intent to apply some of the same design requests related to Lot 7 to Lot 8, and presented a rendering of Lot 8 (63 Vista Encinos) to show the architectural relationship between Lots 7 and 8.

For Lot 7 (65 Vista Encinos), Mr. Jones identified the lowering of the lower level of the home by two feet, as had been done for Lot 8; the lowering of the uppermost plate an additional foot to nine feet; a change in the pitch of the roof from 4:12 to 3:12; recessed windows, as requested by staff; and the use of a pre-cast stone around the entry portal. He offered copies of the modified roof plan to identify the modification to the adjusted roof height. He explained that the rendering presented did not represent the adjustments but the aesthetics of the original design in terms of the materials, colors, and architectural details. He reiterated the proposed use of pre-cast stone around the entry portal with the remainder of the home to be a stucco material.

Audrey Bentley, a resident of Ketelsen Court, Moraga, identified the project site as directly at the end of Ketelsen Court where all of the existing homes conformed to the hills and were on one level. On the other side, the existing homes were large, but built on a hill and appeared to be single story blending in with everything with significant space between the homes. She described the proposed home as out of character with the existing neighborhood, and had the appearance of a ghetto. She suggested the developer was building one home at a time to give the illusion of space. She understood that no one on Ketelsen Court and Larch Avenue liked the development and she asked the DRB to listen to and understand the neighbors' concerns. She urged consideration of a separation of greenery between the project site and the existing homes on Larch Avenue, and did not want the new homes to loom over the homes below. While vegetation had been planted on the project site, it had not been maintained and had died. She suggested the homes would be better placed in Sanders Ranch or some other area with open space.

Sean Sherwood, a resident of Canyon Court, Moraga, who resided outside of the 500-foot public notification zone, commented that he had learned of the project when the story poles had been erected and could view the entire story pole structure from his living room. He expressed concern with the lack of vegetative screening, the size of the home, and the invasion of privacy, while he understood the home could not be single story, he urged a green or privacy screen. He asked whether he too could build a 4,000 plus square foot home on his property, and expressed concern with the precedent that could be set if the design of the home was approved. He provided photos taken of the story poles to illustrate how the home would affect the privacy of his home.

Nancy Sandlund, 30 Baitx Drive, Moraga, expressed concern with the Spanish style architecture, colors, and the size of the proposed homes, which differed from the existing community, and which would be visible on the hillsides. She also expressed concern with the patchwork quilt approval of individual lots, and noted that Lots 1 and 10 had been designated years ago as transitional lots intended to be one story.

Jane Britten, Moraga, asked whether DRB members had visited Larch Avenue to view the massiveness of the homes and to view how they would loom over the existing residences, impacting the privacy and value of the homes in the existing neighborhood.

In response to a member of the audience, Ms. Samonsky identified the purpose of a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) as documentation of environmental review of a proposed subdivision, with the MND including a proposed set of mitigation measures to ensure the project would not have a significant environmental impact as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

#### RESPONSE:

Mr. Pickett disagreed with a comment that had characterized the project as a "ghetto," emphasizing that Branagh Development had created some of the most outstanding neighborhoods in Contra Costa County. He explained that the developer had done everything technologically possible to make the renderings as accurate as possible, as borne out by the consistency of the story poles, as surveyed, and the renderings that fit over the story poles.

Mr. Pickett stated the developer was working on visual studies of neighbors' rear yards to address visual landscaping screening, and while he acknowledged the photographs taken by a resident with the story poles visible from Canyon Court, he explained that the photographs should be taken into perspective in that the story poles would have little impact. He added that the project had evolved, the developer had planned ten other homes, had refocused efforts to provide a variety in the subdivision to ensure it was not a cookie cutter development, and Spanish style architecture was consistent with Moraga. While the Spanish style architecture might not match the adjacent homes, it was Moraga, and was a viable and appreciable architectural style.

Mr. Pickett explained that the developer could not address the future homes since the developer had tabled those homes and was concentrating on the four lots with applications pending with the Town. He understood the issues with no more than two, two-story homes in a row, which would be addressed in future designs, as well as the concerns with privacy regarding the downhill lots. He had taken photographs from Larch Avenue and could view only the flags. He suggested there would be filtered views of the tops of the homes, when built, which would blend into the foreground through gaps in the vegetation. Once additional vegetation had been added, and matured, the views would be inconsequential. He stated the developer had designed an attractive home, had taken into consideration input from earlier meetings with the DRB Subcommittee for Lot 8, and would take the initiative to apply changes before being asked for Lot 7 based on that input. He expressed his hope the DRB would approve the design of the home with the suggested changes in the staff report, which included a provision for another DRB Subcommittee meeting.

#### PUBLIC COMMENTS CLOSED

Boardmember Glover appreciated the fact the applicant had worked with staff and the DRB to produce a compatible design that would be consistent with the Town's requirements; however, he expressed concern with the process of reviewing home designs one at a time, particularly given the Town's Design Guidelines requiring that two, two-story homes not be located adjacent to one another, which made it difficult to fully appreciate the vision for the development.

Boardmember Escano-Thompson agreed there was a disadvantage of not seeing the homes in total. She asked whether the developer would provide some input on the different styles of the homes yet to be built.

Mr. Pickett reiterated that the developer had not developed the neighborhood beyond four lots. The project was a new development with a nice variety, not tract-like, and catered to the market. He suggested the home designs would enhance the neighborhood through variety. He pointed out that the lots were existing legal, single-family lots that would be developed over time. The development of the four initial lots would set the tone for the neighborhood, and were all that the developer was contractually involved in with the owner of the property at this time. He emphasized that he had been building in Moraga for 40 years, had experience building one home at a time, and the review process was not unusual and was typically Moraga. He cited a number of developments that had been processed in the same fashion.

In response to Boardmember Crews, Mr. Horn explained that the transitional lots identified as Lots 1 and 10 had been discussed in the findings for the approval of the project, with no standards applied to those lots. A lot line adjustment had also been required for the lots on the edge of the subdivision as part of the approval, which was a condition of approval that still needed to be finalized prior to issuance of a building permit for any of the lots.

Boardmember Crews clarified that the sketch of the home for 65 Vista Encinos had not reflected the adjustments in the plans.

Mr. Pickett explained the original proposal had been for the home in the colored rendering and the full set of plans as part of the original submittal. The sketches presented to the DRB at this time had offered modifications to the plans to address comments on the size and scale of Lot 8, which involved a similar scaled home. The conditions of approval for 65 Vista Encinos included a recommendation for the DRB Subcommittee to review those changes.

Boardmember Crews appreciated the applicant's willingness to address the concerns related to the scale of the home and the plate height. He suggested the architectural package in general was well done. He clarified that the roof slope would remain at 4:12 while the garage for the lower level had been reduced to 3:12.

Boardmember Zhu questioned whether the DRB was comfortable approving the sketch which he found to be a substantial change from the original drawing. He acknowledged the concerns from the public and found that many of the concerns had been answered and addressed. He affirmed that he had met with the applicant as part of the DRB Subcommittee, and identified the changes the developer was willing to make, which he characterized as major changes. He appreciated the applicant and architect's willingness to make that gesture and to participate in the process.

Boardmember Zhu otherwise suggested a hipped roof would be a benefit regardless of the style since the hip would have a slope on both sides as opposed to the gabled roof which would read as a greater height. He preferred a hip as opposed to a gable roof approach, liked the Spanish style architecture, and agreed that a variety of different styles on the same street would be helpful. He clarified with the architect that the center plate would be lowered one foot down, and drop down to nine feet. He also understood that modifications to Lot 8 had proposed to lower the center piece, upper room, and stairway further down to create a break from the main roof, and asked if the same could be done for Lot 7. He suggested the soffit height could be lowered another two feet.

Mr. Jones explained that the uppermost floor was approximately three feet back from the massing. He expressed the willingness to work with staff to investigate that option, although it could have an impact on the massing and there would be livability issues. He reiterated that the slope would be 4:12 and the lower portion of the window bay would be removed, not the entire portion, with the proposal as shown on the side elevation to have narrowed the front mass.

Responding to the Chair, Mr. Pickett reiterated that applications for Lots 4 and 5 had been submitted to the Town, and story poles had been erected for Lot 4 in anticipation

that Lots 4 and 7 would be discussed by the DRB at this time. Staff had requested that Lot 4 be postponed and the applicant take the opportunity with the extra time to focus on the visuals. As a result, the developer would be folding Lots 4 and 5 together, with both homes to illustrate the impacts through photo images and renderings. Lots 7 and 8 had similar floor plans but different elevations. Lots 4 and 5 would be unique due to the configuration of Lot 5, which would have a side entrance and rear property line. The elevations for those floor plans would be quite different. Story poles for Lot 5 would be installed soon in ample time to create photo simulations for both homes together.

Mr. Horn affirmed that staff had received an application for Lot 5, which was still under review. Assuming staff received complete applications for Lots 4 and 5, he anticipated they could be available for review in late summer. He also affirmed that a Final Map for the subdivision had been recorded and that a Subdivision Improvement Agreement had involved elements requiring completion prior to issuance of building permits. The action before the DRB at this time only involved the lot at 65 Vista Encinos, as outlined in the staff report.

Chair Helber clarified with Mr. Pickett the specific elevations of the home and suggested the garage slab, and not the curb, had been used as the reference; the home was another two feet higher than the garage slab. He also clarified that a drain would be installed behind the retaining wall to pick up water although there were no details for the drain or the retaining wall. He also identified the location of the meters on the home, with clearance requirements pursuant to PG&E, and with a portion of the fence behind the man door.

Mr. Pickett clarified there would not be a gate in the fence since there would be a retaining wall with no reasonable access through a fence at that point, and a short fence on top of the retaining wall, with a six-foot barrier would be a reasonable solution to prevent access on that side of the house, with the meters after that.

Chair Helber complimented the architect and the applicant for the landscape plan, the planting of coastal live oaks, and the lush vegetation. He suggested the architecture appeared to be of high quality and was attractive, although while high quality architecture, it would be similar to the adjacent lot the DRB had previously reviewed and approved. While the development had an existing Final Map with each unit coming in one at a time, and the developer had proposed a variety of unique individual homes, he expressed concern with the piecemeal approach resulting in a tract-like plan with different elevations, which was difficult to review.

Chair Helber understood the contractual constraints the developer was under, although he urged any effort to bring in four applications at one time to make the DRB's job easier and to ensure the architecture in totality would work well. Absent the knowledge of what the homes would look like altogether, the single-story homes would have to look like single-story homes, which would be difficult if they could not be reviewed at one time. He was otherwise pleased that the architect had listened to the DRB's comments and had been responsive to the comments regarding Lot 8.

Planning Commission Liaison Kuckuk commented that she had not seen the development in the past despite having served six years on the DRB, and currently a

member of the Planning Commission. She had also not been privy to the discussions of the adjacent lot. She complimented the architect on the high quality design, found the lot with a sloping hillside to be a concern, and suggested the Floor Area Ratios (FARs) did not identify nor address the impacts on a neighborhood. She cited the comments from the public on the massing, and suggested the second story, two-story wall was not set back and added to the massing, and while it had been broken by the style of architecture, it remained a concern combined with the adequacy of usable yard space.

Boardmember Glover asked if the applicant had any concerns with the Draft Action Memorandum, and Mr. Pickett reiterated his opinion there would be no exception for the outdoor space given that the plan had provided over 1,600 square feet of outdoor space with the loggia, canopy for the second floor and patio.

Boardmember Glover acknowledged the concerns of the residents but suggested there was nothing in the construction that would deplete the value of the neighboring homes. He found that the project had addressed the ridgeline issues.

Boardmember Escano-Thompson suggested the homes looked alike given the same floor plan, and aside from the hipped roof and stucco materials, the windows were in the same location. She sought more articulation to the windows, to potentially be recessed more in keeping with the Spanish style architecture. She otherwise described the homes as nice looking.

Mr. Jones clarified it had been proposed that the front and side windows be recessed.

Boardmember Crews acknowledged the concerns expressed by the public, but noted the architect and his team had proposed mitigation measures to reduce the scale of the building, which was in the limited range the DRB could request. The DRB could not reduce the size of the building in terms of square footage since the home complied with the Town's requirements. He appreciated the efforts to reduce the scale of the home and to break the massing of the building, and had no issue with the exceptions that had been requested, which he characterized as minor.

Boardmember Zhu clarified that the home would be set back 15 feet from the other elevation, and that for each foot above the 20-foot threshold would require an additional foot of setback. The 20 feet had been measured from grade to the bottom of the roof. From the property line, the home should be set back 16 feet.

With respect to the roof, Boardmember Zhu suggested the roof could continue down and he understood the lower roof had broken the massing; he was okay with that element of the design. He remained concerned with the inability to review the development as a whole, particularly in order to adequately view the streetscape and upper portions of the lots. He expressed his hope that detail would be provided for the review of future lots.

Boardmember Escano-Thompson understood that Condition 6(b) would not apply to the project and was a carryover from the previous elevation.

Chair Helber recommended the term "wainscoting" be removed from Condition 6(b) or that the condition be stricken entirely.

Boardmember Glover agreed with the removal of Condition 6(b), with Condition 6(c) to be retitled as (b).

On motion by Boardmember Glover, seconded by Boardmember Zhu to adopt the Draft Action Memorandum dated June 22, 2015, approving DRB 05-15 for 65 Vista Encinos, subject to the findings and conditions as shown, and subject to the removal of Condition 6(b), with Condition 6(c) to be retitled as (b). The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes:	Escano-Thompson, Crews, Glover, Zhu, Helber
Noes:	None
Abstain:	None
Absent:	None

Chair Helber identified the 10-day appeal period of a decision of the Design Review Board in writing to the Town Clerk subject to an applicable appeal fee.

Chair Helber declared a recess at 8:55 P.M. The Design Review Board meeting reconvened at 9:00 P.M., with all Boardmembers present.

**C. 288 Sandringham North**

**Applicant:** Forster Associates Architects, 101 Gregory Lane, #45, Pleasant Hill, CA 94523  
Design Review (DRB 06-15) for New Construction of Additions Totaling 841 square feet to the Rear of the Existing Residence (3 DUA, BH)

Mr. Horn presented the staff report dated June 22, 2015, for design review of new construction of additions totaling 841 square feet to the rear of the existing residence at 288 Sandringham North. Due to the project's consistency with the Zoning Ordinance and General Plan, and minimal impact on surrounding properties, he recommended that the DRB approve the Draft Action Memorandum dated June 22, 2015, approving DRB 06-15, subject to findings and conditions of approval.

In response to the DRB, Mr. Horn clarified that the entire roof would be changed from tile to a composition roofing material; the applicant had provided a geotechnical report for the proposed lap pool addition which had been peer reviewed by Cal Engineering, the Town's Geotechnical Consultant; Cal Engineering had recommended as the pool was constructed the plans would need to be re-reviewed by the Geotechnical Consultant to ensure all mitigation measures had been incorporated pursuant to Conditions 6 and 20 of the Draft Action Memorandum.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS OPENED**

Steve Forster, Forster Associates Architects, 101 Gregory Lane, #45, Pleasant Hill, described the modest additions to the home as under the allowable FAR for the site. The additions would be all one story in keeping with the one story of the home. The improvements to the façade would include a change from T1-11 to stucco siding, and roof changes in massing. Exterior changes included a complete re-landscaping of the front yard with the addition of trees and a small lawn area. The rear yard would

include hardscape decks, a small lawn area, a small level play area, a lap pool, and terrace walls five and half feet in height.

Mr. Forster commended the landscape architect and planning staff for working on the application. He explained that the landscape plans were consistent with Appendix B of the Moraga Design Guidelines, with vegetation to consist of drought tolerant and native landscape materials.

Mr. Forster suggested a successful precedent had been set for other properties below on Moraga Road, which had similar features of retaining walls, and with the proposed landscaping and existing trees to screen the retaining walls from view. He emphasized the intent to design a thoughtful home for the homeowner and the community, with a careful approach to all of the design aspects to meet the objectives of the MMC.

Mr. Forster also clarified that the project geotechnical consultant had conducted three borings related to the lap pool, had found that the site was suitable, and that drilled piers would support the structures. The north roof would be a new structure, was currently a gable roof, and a hip roof had been chosen to provide a more pleasing appearance along Moraga Road. A hip roof on the addition on the other side would anchor the home, provide a nice profile, and the center roofs would be raised. Transom windows had been chosen to allow views below. The garage roof would not change but would extend a bit higher to meet the addition at the rear.

Art Koons, Moraga, whose home was located directly across the street from the subject property, recalled that the Town had required the foundation of the home to be placed five feet into the bedrock, with poured concrete, reinforcing rods, and on-site supervision from a Soils Engineer. He questioned whether the same requirements applied to the additions. While not opposed to the size of the home, he recalled that the original proposal for the lots in 1985/86 had been for a two-story, 4,000 square foot home, which the Town at that time had opposed. He cited the history of the hillside which had slid in the past, and noted that when he had first moved into his home over 30 years ago he had enjoyed clear views of the valley and the Town. He defined the property as part of the scenic corridor with no building allowed higher than 15 or 16 feet, and asked whether the Town would allow an exception to allow a taller building that would significantly impact his views. He otherwise liked the overall design of the home, the exterior, and the yard work, and while he did not object to an increase in size, he remained concerned with the building height.

An unidentified resident of Sandringham North Drive, identified himself as the next door neighbor to the property. He supported the design and the submittal.

The property owner of 243 Sandringham North Drive, a neighbor, expressed support for the application.

Leah Saroni, 296 Sandringham, Moraga, a neighbor, also supported the application.

Mr. Forster reported that a Soils Engineer would be on-site to observe the work to make sure the work conformed to his report.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS CLOSED**

Boardmember Zhu clarified with Mr. Forster that the roof pitch would be between 6.5:12 and 5:12, with the existing roof at 5:12. The new roof at the north would be 6.5:12 and the center would be 5:12 to create the transom windows at the rear. He noted the intent to create volume in the master suite, with the existing floor plate at the north to remain at 8 feet at the wall, which would include a ceiling height in the master suite at 12 feet.

Boardmember Zhu suggested that the roof pitch was too steep, to which Mr. Forster advised the roof pitch could be lowered almost two feet and he would be willing to make that change; however, the roof at the north and center would remain higher than the existing roof.

Mr. Forster clarified that the chimney height would remain the same height, as proposed, with the transom windows above the doors, and with the plate in the middle area raised to create the transom windows.

Boardmember Zhu suggested altering the roof pitch.

Chair Helber understood the need to raise the plate height, although altering the roof pitch would bring the ridgeline down approximately 16 to 24 inches, and could follow suit all the way down.

Mr. Forster offered a sketch of the 5:12 as opposed to a 6.5:12 pitch, and suggested the roof pitch could be lowered almost 24 inches, although he wanted to keep the transom windows at the rear to celebrate views. He added that the slope of the roof could be lowered slightly, and the roof to the north could also be lowered slightly with a change in the slope. The garage roof was already at 5:12.

Boardmember Zhu commented that he was not a fan of a mixture of hipped and gabled roofs. He understood the reason for the hip roof to minimize the massing, although he suggested the gable ends be clipped to offer a hip roof on the top while maintaining the gable at the lower portion.

Mr. Forster agreed with concerns related to a mixture of roof styles but in this case given the hillside, he found the design to be an appropriate solution since it carved some of the roof away from the existing gable.

Boardmember Zhu also spoke to the height of the retaining wall, clarified the existing grade, and expressed concern for a perception of too much height in the area of the lap pool.

Mr. Forster identified the maximum height of the lap pool, which would not be an infinity pool, and described the grading for the top of the deck to reduce the height of the stucco retaining wall, which would be the same color as the home. No cap had been proposed on top of the retaining wall.

Boardmember Zhu was familiar with the site and suggested the retaining wall and lap pool would be visible from the street, although Mr. Forster disagreed in that the existing trees and proposed landscaping would screen the lap pool and retaining wall from view. He added that the walls next to the road would be seven feet in height.

Boardmember Zhu also affirmed with staff that a condition of approval had been proposed that the stucco be a darker earth tone color, pursuant to Condition 13, as opposed to the light tan color that had initially been proposed.

An unidentified resident and neighbor of the property, whose home was currently white and who was considering repainting her residence, preferred not to see a brown home on the property since it would be unattractive and appear barn-like.

Chair Helber commented that he had driven past the property and suggested the project would represent a tremendous improvement to the site. He had concerns with the height of the ridgeline and impacts on views although he recognized the mitigations that had been proposed. He had also noticed the starkness of the existing color which stood out negatively as compared to the existing neighborhood. He found the color proposed by the applicant to be appropriate, and was pleased to see the wainscoting stone veneer terminating in a logical location. He found the additions to be inconsequential to almost everyone in the audience, reiterated that the project would represent an improvement to the overall home, and was ready to see the project move forward.

Mr. Horn stated the applicant had proposed planters and retaining walls in the frontage, although a survey of the property had shown it would be in the public right-of-way (ROW). The applicant would have to readjust some of the front planters, the retaining walls would have to be set back three feet from the ROW, no trees could be planted in the ROW, and an encroachment permit must be obtained for any work in the front area. Condition 21 had been added to require a height certification letter pursuant to the condition, as written, and the condition may have to be modified in response to how much the height of the home could be lowered. He asked the DRB to opine on those issues.

Planning Commission Liaison Kuckuk spoke to the paint color, roof, and stone siding materials, which were typically reviewed by staff with material samples provided. She suggested staff review all of those items to ensure they were harmonious with the hillside and with the neighbors. If there were any concerns with those issues, those concerns should be brought to the Design Review Board for consideration. She found there was a high contrast between the stucco and roof colors.

Mr. Horn provided a sample of the adobe earth tone paint color and advised that the roof would be gray.

Boardmember Zhu asked that the architect consider applying the same stone veneer to the lap pool retaining wall. From the audience, the property owner's father and neighbor stated he was flexible as long as it did not add too much to the cost.

Boardmember Zhu also suggested that the retaining wall include a cap. He preferred to see the retaining wall be part of the earth and not appear like a structure.

Boardmember Escano-Thompson recommended the addition of a condition to read:

*Rear yard retaining wall to be adequately screened by landscaping or stone.*

Boardmember Glover suggested Condition 12 be modified, to read:

*The applicant shall submit a final landscaping plan to the Town of Moraga Planning Department to be included with construction plan submittal, which shall adequately screen the lap pool retaining wall with either landscaping or enhanced with a stone veneer. The landscape plan shall be compliant with the Model Water Efficient Landscaping Ordinance, and any additional requirements imposed by the State of California or local water agency with regard to emergency water conservation measures, as well as landscape-related Conditions of Approval specified elsewhere in this approval.*

Chair Helber offered a motion to approve the Draft Action Memorandum dated June 22, 2015 to approve 288 Sandringham North, DRB 06-15, subject to the findings and conditions with the revision to Condition 12, as stated, and with Condition 6 to be further modified, as follows:

*The applicant shall have the Project Engineer, Peters & Ross, review the structural plans for the project, including home foundation, pool foundation and retaining walls, for conformance with their recommendations contained in their April 2015 report and provide written documentation of this review to the Planning Department. The structural plans and Peters and Ross written documentation shall be peer reviewed by the Town's geotechnical consultant.*

Condition 13 was to be stricken. A new condition to be placed prior to Condition 6 was recommended, to read:

The applicant shall resubmit the plans showing a revised roof plan, as indicated during the Design Review Board presentation of changing the roof pitch on the northernmost roof from 6:12 to 5:12; revising the roof pitch of the two existing gable roofs to reduce the roof height; chamfering the corners of the gable bands; and with the last hip roof to be 5:12.

Boardmember Glover seconded the motion.

#### PUBLIC COMMENTS CLOSED

On motion by Chair Helber, seconded by Boardmember Glover to adopt the Draft Action Memorandum dated June 22, 2015, approving DRB 06-15 for 288 Sandringham North, subject to findings and conditions of approval, as modified, as follows:

Condition 12 modified, to read:

The applicant shall submit a final landscaping plan to the Town of Moraga Planning Department to be included with construction plan submittal, which would adequately screen the lap pool retaining wall with landscaping or enhanced with stone veneer, which shall be consistent with the Model Water Efficient Landscaping Ordinance, and any additional requirements imposed by the State of California or local water agency with regard to emergency water

conservation measures, as well as landscape-related Conditions of Approval specified elsewhere in this approval.

Condition 6 modified, to read:

The applicant shall have the Project Engineer, Peters & Ross, and peer review by the Town's Geotechnical Consultant, to review the structural plans for the project, including foundations, retaining walls, and pool, for conformance with their recommendations contained in their April 2015 report and provide written documentation of this review to the Planning Department.

Strike Condition 13; and

Add a new condition prior to Condition 6, to read:

The applicant shall resubmit the plans showing a revised roof plan, as indicated during the Design Review Board presentation of changing the roof pitch on the northernmost roof from 6:12 to 5:12; revising the roof pitch of the two existing gable roofs to reduce the roof height; chamfering the corners of the gable bands; and with the last hip roof to be 5:12.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes:	Escano-Thompson, Crews, Glover, Zhu, Helber
Noes:	None
Abstain:	None
Absent:	None

Chair Helber identified the 10-day appeal period of a decision of the Design Review Board in writing to the Town Clerk subject to an applicable appeal fee.

## **5. ROUTINE AND OTHER MATTERS**

### **A. Planning Commission Liaison Report – Kuckuk**

Planning Commission Liaison Kuckuk reported that the Planning Commission had met on June 15, had held a public hearing to consider an amendment to the MMC pertaining to the Moraga Open Space Ordinance (MOSO) to allow private and non-profit recreational uses and that discussion had been continued to a meeting in August due to concerns with the way the amended language had been structured. In addition, the Commission had held a study session for a Conceptual Development Plan (CDP) for seven small lot, single-family, three-story homes to be located at 1015 Country Club Drive, which project had not been well received by the Planning Commission. The Commission had also reviewed the Parking Management Plan for Saint Mary's College (SMC).

Boardmember Glover reported that some residents had been noticed that SMC would be holding an alumni event this weekend with contact information in the event of any issues of concern.

## 6. REPORTS

### A. **Design Review Board**

Chair Helber commented that during the May 26, 2015 meeting when the DRB had reviewed and approved the application for 63 Vista Encinos, he had asked the Planning Commission Liaison present to report to the Planning Commission the DRB's difficulty reviewing the subdivision lots one at a time. Even though the project had an approved Final Map, he suggested the DRB had been left in an awkward position approving lots on a piecemeal basis.

Planning Commission Liaison Kuckuk asked staff whether policies or guidelines could be reviewed to address that situation, to which Ms. Samonsky advised that such a request could be added as an upcoming agenda item at the direction of the DRB. She commented that for Minor Subdivisions (four units or less), there was no requirement that conceptual architecture be provided other than under particular circumstances. She acknowledged there could be similar situations in the future and cited, as an example, the Moraga Country Club where numerous legal lots were vacant, and where an application for a single home or multiple homes could be submitted.

Chair Helber expressed his appreciation for staff's attention to address the need for using recycled water for dust mitigation, through conditions of approval, and encouraged staff to consider including that standard for any project with grading.

Boardmember Glover reported that the Hillside and Ridgelines Steering Committee had met on June 16. He detailed some of the topics that had been discussed and reported that the next meeting had been scheduled for June 30. He also emphasized the importance of ensuring that DRB meeting minutes were published on the Town's website within 10 working days of the date of the meeting.

Ms. Samonsky explained the process for the preparation of meeting minutes which involved staff edits and formal approval by the DRB and receipt of their corrections, which could take longer than 10 days. She was uncertain why the meeting minutes had not been posted on the Town's website, and noted the DRB had not been meeting twice a month which was one reason why the minutes could not be published within 10 days of a meeting date.

Recognizing that staff may not be able to meet a 10-day turnaround to post the meeting minutes, Boardmember Glover encouraged the posting of meeting minutes within at least one month of the meeting date.

Chair Helber added that the Moraga Center Specific Plan (MCSP) Implementation Plan Subcommittee would meet on June 24.

### B. **Staff**

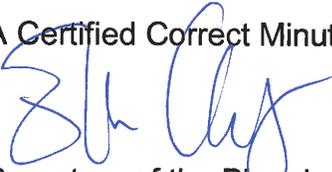
Ms. Samonsky reported that the project at 5 Paseo Linares was complete and encouraged DRB members to visit the property; 1045 Camino Pablo was close to completion; and SMC was moving forward with an update to its Campus Master Plan,

with the Town Council to consider the approval of a consultant to prepare the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the SMC Campus Master Plan during its meeting on June 24.

**7. ADJOURNMENT**

On motion by Boardmember Glover, seconded by Boardmember Escano-Thompson and carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting at approximately 10:30 P.M.

A Certified Correct Minutes Copy

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'J. H. ...', is written over the text 'A Certified Correct Minutes Copy'.

Secretary of the Planning Commission

