

**SAN ANSELMO PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF DECEMBER 7, 1998**

Chair Zwick convened the San Anselmo Planning Commission meeting at 7:30 p.m. in the Council chamber.

CALL TO ORDER

Commissioners present: Dowd, Wittenkeller, House and Israel
Commissioners absent: Harle, Cronk

Staff present: Senior Planner Wight and Associate Planner Griffin

OPEN TIME FOR PUBLIC EXPRESSION

No one spoke during this time.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. **Minutes – November 2, 1998 and November 16, 1998**
2. **V-9856 – Paige and Eileen Gaines, 415 Scenic Avenue, A/P 7-032-05, a variance to reconstruct and extend an existing uncovered deck within 7.25' of the rear property line, on property located within the R-1 Zoning District (above 150'msl) Staff person: Griffin)**

M/s Israel/House, and unanimously passed (5-0) to approve the consent agenda.

Chair Zwick advised all parties of interest of the ten-day appeal period.

PUBLIC HEARING

1. **V-9854/DR-9841 – Peter and Cherie Welch, 111 Broadmoor Avenue, A/P 5-112-06, Design Review for a 623 square foot second story addition. Variances to: 1) rebuild the previously burned first story within 9'-11" of the rear property line (20' required); 2) build a new raised entrance ramp, landing and overhead arbor within 16'-6" of the front property line (20' required); and 3) rebuild a 500 square foot garage within 17' of the front property line (20' required), on property located within the R-1 Zoning District. (Staff person: Griffin)**

Mr. Griffin presented the staff report.

Morgan Hall, architect representing the applicant, stated that they tried to respond to the comments of the Commission to move the second story addition to the east so that they would not require a variance. They have made the second story narrower, approximately 18' wide, to minimize the obstruction of views of 147 Broadmoor Court. His clients have no problem installing obscure glass in the bathroom and will raise the sill height so they could not look down on the neighbor at the west. Regarding the finished floor level, they are keeping it as is. They are not thinking about raising the basement level because of budgetary reasons.

In response to Chair Zwick, Mr. Hall said they are intending to use the current foundation, although they have not analyzed it.

Alma Thomlinson, 41 Berkeley Avenue, stated she was more comfortable with the changes but the addition will still take away some of their views of the hills but is not sure if it will take away any light. She still feels the addition is quite large for the neighborhood but supports the idea of raising the windowsill.

Commissioner Dowd stated he is comfortable with the proposal and could move the staff report.

Commissioners' Wittenkeller and House concurred.

Chair Zwick stated that the addition is very big and variances were requested at the last meeting. He could support the project if the floor height at the basement level remains the same as it currently is, if the sill height is raised, and if the windows are translucent.

Commissioner Israel said that the changes respond to the neighbor's concerns and will be a successful addition. He would like to see story poles erected in the future for second story additions to be able to view the impact. He would have no problem with excavating the basement but did not want to see the finished floor raised.

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Commissioner Wittenkeller would also like to see a drip irrigation system installed and would leave it up to staff to review and approve the type of vegetation. He suggested the applicant paint a fairly large sample of the proposed exterior color prior to painting the building because it is very light and bright.

M/s Dowd/Wittenkeller, and unanimously passed (5-0), to approve the application with conditions as set forth in the staff report; and with the amended conditions that the finished first floor remain as is, and that the bathroom window be translucent or raise the window sill.

Chair Zwick advised all parties of interest of the ten-day appeal period.

2. **DR-9842/PDP-9805 – Chris Albrick, 370 Redwood Road, A/P 7-360-05, (Old Lot A)** Precise Development Plan building envelope amendment and Design Review of a single family residential dwelling, on property located within the R-1-H Zoning District (above 150' msl) (Staff person: Wight)

3. **DR-9843/PDP-9806 – Chris Albrick, 376 Redwood Road, A/P 7-360-06, (Old Lot B)** Precise Development Plan building envelope amendment and Design Review of a single family residential dwelling, on property located within the R-1-H Zoning District (above 150' msl) (Staff person: Wight)

4. **DR-9844/PDP-9807 – Chris Albrick, 398 Redwood Road, A/P 7-360-07, (Old Lot C)** Precise Development Plan building envelope amendment and Design Review of a single family residential dwelling, on property located within the R-1-H Zoning District (above 150' msl) (Staff person: Wight)

5. **DR-9845/PDP-9808 – Chris Albrick, 392 Redwood Road, A/P 7-360-01, (Old Lot 1)** Precise Development Plan building envelope amendment and Design Review of a single family residential dwelling, on property located within the R-1-H Zoning District (above 150' msl) (Staff person: Wight)

6. **DR-9846/PDP-9809 – Chris Albrick, 394 Redwood Road, A/P 7-360-02, (Old Lot 2)** Precise Development Plan building envelope amendment and Design Review of a single family residential dwelling, on property located within the R-1-Zoning District (above 150' msl) (Staff person: Wight)

7. **DR-9847/PDP-9810 – Chris Albrick, 396 Redwood Road, A/P 7-360-03, (Old Lot 3)** Precise Development Plan building envelope amendment and Design Review of a single family residential dwelling, on property located within the R-1-H Zoning District (above 150' msl) (Staff person: Wight)

Ms. Wight provided a background on what was originally called the "Fraser lots" and then an overview of the specific sites.

The applicant provided the following comments about the overall project:

Steve Arago, C.S.W. Stuber Strough, and representing the applicant, explained that the road already exists but they are before the Commission because the building envelopes have changed. The building envelopes were not clearly defined at the time of Tentative Map approval. When the new owner came in and asked the architect to refine the plans, they realized that there were small problems using the existing building envelopes. They feel the original building envelopes allow them a net reduction of four trees that will be saved. They also realized that Lot 1 did not work well because it did not follow existing contours. The same thing happened with Lot C; the original driveway would go up to a 25% grade, and they are now using the contours. There is a net reduction for Lot 3. The total overall footprint increase for the six buildings is approximately 1,000 square feet.

Paul Hartman, architect representing the applicant, stated that they went over the proposed building envelopes and height requirements with Ann Chaney, the previous Planning Director. The changes are only to modify the building envelopes because of site specifics. They are using the craftsman style on all the houses.

Chris Albrick, applicant, stated that Lot 1 is the toughest lot because of the steepness of the lot and the amount of tree loss. The other houses fall more organically into their building envelope.

The public provided the following comments about the overall project:

Norm Weinstrop, 41 Allyn Avenue, cannot speak about traffic impacts but his house is just below Lot B and he can speak about drainage issues. When Mr. Fraser owned the property, he cut down many trees and he is concerned about the amount of drainage runoff. He would like to see a concentrated drainage plan.

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Eric Sherman, 360 Redwood Road, was concerned about impacts to the roadway from construction vehicles. He did not think any work was supposed to take place on the weekends and yet there was work being done every weekend when Mr. Fraser owned the property.

Mary Cone, 349 Redwood Road, would be looking directly at Lot C. The house is beautiful and she likes the colors and materials chosen although she felt the house sizes seemed rather large. She was concerned about the road and did not want work being done on Sundays.

Richard Hems, 390 Redwood Road, was concerned about tree loss, drainage, and wanted to see as many trees planted as are removed. He was also concerned about the condition of Redwood Road and is interested in how it will be improved.

Cathy Sanders, 310 Redwood Road, complemented the exterior design of the houses but wanted close attention paid to the construction of the properties because they surround the open space. She was concerned about the houses at 392 and 398 Redwood Roads because they are the most visible lots. She would like to see a photomontage so she can see what they would look like with all the trees gone. She wants to make sure that the houses fit in with the scale of the neighborhood and would like to see smaller, affordable housing.

Matt Owens 12 Allyn Avenue, has two creeks on his property and is concerned about the impact on drainage in the neighborhood. He appreciates what the Town has done to create the open space although he is saddened to see such large homes. There are already crevices in the roadway where the new driveways have been cut into the hillsides and the Public Works Director has required riprap in that area. To allow substandard drainage will be potentially a dangerous to the downhill owners. The removal of trees, and excessive hardscape would create drainage problems. He would like to see an independent engineer hired to meet with the downhill neighbors to provide assurance that there would be no negative impacts.

Chuck Eggers, 18 Allyn Avenue, has experienced serious erosion to his foundation because of a creek on the north and east sides of his house.

Gay Kagy, 280 Redwood Road, stated the houses are too large. Lots 1 and 2 are over 5,700 square feet and should be made smaller; approximately 3,500 – 4,000 square feet to comply with the General Plan. She wanted to make sure the landscaping is in place and that the scotch broom is removed prior to final certificate of occupancy. Drainage is one of the biggest issues and she would like to see a finalized drainage plan to ensure the necessary steps are taken to provide safety to the houses below. She was also concerned about the sharp jagged edges of the rocks in the creek because of the aesthetics.

Commissioner Israel said there are a number of areas that had new slopes and cuts because of the roads being created and wondered why the landscaping was never done.

Mr. Arago responded that there were some areas that originally were supposed to be replanted with trees. The geotechnical engineer required a geo grid and because of that, the soils engineer recommended that trees not be planted because it would jeopardize the repair. Mr. Fraser was to replant some of the native shrubs but it has not been done. He noted that there was a slide repair next to the road and the engineer did not want any trees planted there.

Commissioners comments about the overall project:

Commissioner Israel stated that if the Planning Director approved the geo grid, the project should have come back to the Commission with alternative plantings. There was significant concern in the beginning that all the area would be re-vegetated. He wanted to see that revisited because the area is dramatically open. Because of the exchange for open space, the Town agreed to allow larger homes. He supports replanting of design guidelines, 7 and 1 (under roof). He supports the idea of larger houses if they are not visible. With regard to Lot A – it has one of the most stronger, singular roof designs; although it probably will not be seen if it is not consistent with the design guidelines. He does support white window trims even though it is not part of the design guidelines. He assumed that the building envelopes would be big enough to place something in it. He is comforted to some extent that the building stays primarily within the envelope. In the original vision of the Bald Hill Plan, outside the building envelope is "left in its natural state", such as Quarry Mountain. The plans are very well designed and the landscape is well integrated; He supports the notion of modification to the building envelope as long as there is no significant tree removal. He would like to see each tree that is proposed for removal to be marked. He supports the construction schedule and advised the neighbors to contact the Building Department if the schedule is not complied with. There is a lot of impermeable surface and would like to know if they can use the creeks to take care of the water runoff. He suggests there be a drainage workshop for the neighborhood and the

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Town and supports the comment about landscape verification. He supports the comment about creek side drainage.

Commissioner House stated that the white window trim looks good but it might be visible from a distance. She agrees that the drainage problems should be addressed very early on and supports the idea of a photomontage. She does not want to lose sight about the French and Scotch broom being removed. She does not mind changing the shape of the envelopes but it seems like the houses are built to the outer limits of the envelopes. The outside of the envelope should be in the natural state.

Commissioner Wittenkeller commented that the size of the homes need to be examined for the affect on Redwood Road. He wants more information on drainage; is not opposed to a neighborhood workshop to identify the potential offsite down hill drainage problems. The developer may be required to install offsite improvements as well as onsite drainage retention. Insist that the Public Works Director pay close attention to the drainage issues – or have an independent drainage expert look at it. He liked the look of the homes but wants to make sure there is proper landscaping. A photomontage will not help that much unless the plans are realistic.

Commissioner Dowd had nothing further to add.

Chair Zwick stated that it disturbs him that they have stripped the hillside of vegetation and not replenished it yet. There is already more runoff to the downhill neighbors because of the vegetation loss. He was interested in how the Town allowed larger homes because of the open space that was given to the Town however any home over 5,000 square feet does bear some closer review.

Specific comments about 370 Redwood - Lot A

Matt Owens, 12 Allyn Avenue, felt there was supposed to be a public passage to the designated open space but has not seen it addressed. Ms. Wight responded that the previous Planning Director's recollection was that Mr. Fraser did not want any of his land encumbered by trails.

Cathy Sanders, 310 Redwood Road, stated the trail is an important connection to the Marin County Open Space and would like clarification for the next meeting. Removing 45 trees is more than what was originally approved and it should be reconsidered.

Chris Albrick, applicant, said the tree removal is because of the steep slope and is because of not having to do excessive underpinning. The majority of trees are bay trees. It is true that the house sizes are different than some in the neighborhood, but there was an agreement that they could be larger.

Commissioner Israël stated that the downslope roof is a singular plane and would like to see it broken up, perhaps with a dormer. He would allow a variance to reduce the mass.

Commissioners' Wittenkeller, Dowd and House had nothing further to add.

Specific comments about 376 Redwood Road – Lot B

Norm Weintraub, 45 Allyn Avenue, was concerned about drainage and would like the property lines verified. He would be willing to work with the applicant regarding the location and size of the house because his house is the one that will be most affected.

Commissioner Israel said the east elevation would improve with a dormer or clerestory to break up the façade. A single garage makes for a friendlier facade even though it might not be seen. He wants to make sure that staff takes a critical look at drainage but he does not want to suggest that this project is a direct result of the drainage problems.

Commissioners House, Wittenkeller, Dowd had nothing further to add.

Chair Zwick said he would like to see the chimney reduced on the south elevation and also would like to see the roof area broken up, perhaps with a clerestory.

Specific comments about 398 Redwood Road – Lot C

Cathy Sanders, 310 Redwood Road, stated that this would be the most visible house, even from the Hub. She pointed out that Marin County Open Space District purchased the open space and Mr. Fraser was able to use this money for development of the subdivision. Therefore, it should not be assumed that larger houses are an entitlement.

Commissioner House said that the south elevation is visible going into the development and the least interesting and needs articulation.

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Commissioner Israel said this house is the greatest concern and it is hard to understand the massing because of the story poles. He would like to have the house re-staked. This house has the greatest potential for visibility off site. The design seems more simplistic than the other houses. If he were inclined to reduce the size of the house, it would be on this one. The west side has a sheer roof plane and is not visible; the east elevation is a tall vertical mass and will have the most impact on the entrance. He would like to see the house stepped down the street and would be willing to re-evaluate it once the story poles are re-staked.

Chair Zwick, Commissioners Wittenkeller and Dowd had nothing further to add.

Specific comments about 392 Redwood Road – Lot 1

Cathy Sanders, 310 Redwood Road, stated the house protrudes over a knoll and she is concerned that the house would be very visible to those who live in the neighborhood. The north elevation will be very wide.

Gay Kagy, 280 Redwood Road, said the combined house and garage should be drastically reduced in size.

Richard Hems, 390 Redwood Road, was concerned about the visibility of the house between the trees.

Commissioner Israel said that this site might have the greatest potential for visibility. The north elevation is quite wide and is opposed to three stories. He was having a difficult time because the story poles are not straight. This would be the most visible and the largest house and he would like to see the mass reduced. He wanted to see a composition of smaller type elements to break up the house. The more detail, the nicer the house will be. He is only concerned about these things if they can be seen off site, and this house will be. The north facade, although the largest, will not be visible; the east will be visible and is a very tall elevation and he would rather see it stepped down the hillside. Size is not an issue if the house does not have large facades visible off site.

Commissioner House stated she was not so bothered by the size; the front and south elevations are fine and the west elevation gives privacy to Lot 2. She wanted to have the square footage figures checked and does not want to see 5,000 square feet exceeded.

Commissioner Wittenkeller said he did not want to see a house exceed 5,000 square feet and might want to see the house stepped down the hill. In the wooded areas, the landscape issues require a tremendous balancing act. All the houses should blend in to the landscaping but the Fire Department requires a fire clearance around the sites. He would like to have native plants selectively used and consider deer resistant plants. He would like to see the applicant, prior to any action, come in with a landscaping plan and implementing schedule, particularly at the entrance. He would like to have the applicant create ways to get some smaller trees in place and perhaps modify the grading to create planting pockets. Would like a cross section of the geo grid area to understand the restriction.

Commissioner Dowd said the north elevation is massive but heard that it is covered so he has no problems with the proposal.

Chair Zwick would like to see an implementation plan on the site that was originally approved but never replanted. He would like to see a clerestory window in the atrium rather than the flat skylight; the more articulation on the building, the better. A consideration would be to use wider columns, and feel they can revisit the chimneys even though they are over the height restriction.

Commissioner Israel stated that the notion of a trellis adds another dimension and should be considered to help soften the architecture on all the buildings.

Specific comments about 394 Redwood Road – Lot 2

Resident, 15 Allyn Avenue, just recently bought his house and stated that there has been no mention that these houses are not in scale with other houses in the neighborhoods.

Cathy Sanders, 310 Redwood Road, stated that this house would be over the legal size. This house is over the FAR for this lot and it should be checked.

Commissioner Israel has no problems with this house, scale or design elements.

Commissioners Dowd, Wittenkeller and House had nothing further to add.

Specific comments about 396 Redwood Road – Lot 3

There was no public input.

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Commissioner Israel had no problem with the house there is a long roof on the north elevation and would like to see it broken up with a dormer or clerestory.

Commissioners Dowd, House, Wittenkeller had nothing to add.

Chair Zwick said the nice thing is this house has a lot of the pavilion feeling but the size and scale should be checked and he is opposed to it exceeding the maximum.

M/s Israel/Zwick, and unanimously passed (5-0), to continue the applications to the meeting of 1/5/99 with the additional information to be provided as follows: 1) Would like to see the corners of the house staked for Lots 1 and C; 2) do boundary lines and tape the ridges of the poles for Lot B; 3) Place yellow surveyor tape on the trees to be removed on the original building envelope; red surveyor tape on the trees to be removed on the proposed building envelope and blue surveyor tape on the trees to be saved; 4) have applicant arrange for a neighborhood workshop on drainage prior to the next meeting; 5) Verify floor area calculations on all the houses; 6) Provide the Town's process for review of drainage and wants reassurance that the drainage has been address prior to approval, and 7) look into the trail easement over Lot A; want some reassurance that the drainage has been addressed prior to approval.

CONTINUED ITEMS

1. **PDP-9505/Parcel Split-9503/V-9549/DR-9525 - Carlos Castro, 444 Redwood Road, A/P 7-191-10,** 1) Land Division, Precise Development Plan, Density Determination, and Design Review to split an existing property currently developed with a single family residence in order to construct a new house; 2) a Variance to construct a retaining wall a total of 60' long along the uphill side of Redwood Road (within 0' of the property line) in order to widen Redwood Road to 15' of paving for fire safety reasons; and 4) remove one heritage tree (30" bay) on property located within the R-1-H Zoning District (above 150' mean sea level) (Staff person: Chaney) CONTINUED TO 12/21/98

GENERAL DISCUSSION

REPORT OF UPCOMING APPEALS TO TOWN COUNCIL

The Eisenberger Negative Declaration has been appealed.

ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY, DECEMBER 21, 1998

The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 p.m.