

**SAN ANSELMO PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 3, 2003**

A. CALL TO ORDER

Commissioners Present: Chair Harris, Vice Chair Sisich, Fernandez, House, Wittenkeller,
Commissioners Absent: Jochum, Zwick

B. OPEN TIME FOR PUBLIC EXPRESSION

No one spoke during this time.

C. CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. **U-0218/DR-0237 - Seneca Properties, LLC, 240 Redwood Road, APN 7-095-01**, Hillside design review of a proposed 3,202 square foot three-story single family dwelling and a 488 square foot garage (existing 700 square foot dwelling will be removed in conjunction with this project).(staff person: Wight) **CONTINUED TO FEBRUARY 18, 2003**

**D. PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS
CONSENT AGENDA**

1. **MINUTES – January 6, 2003**

M/s House/Sisich and passed (5-0) to approve the minutes.

2. **V-0304 – Victoria Moore, 34 Tomahawk Drive, APN 177-262-04**, a variance to convert the two car garage into a family room and place the two cars, side by side on the driveway, within 5' of the rear property line (Code: 2: 9'x19' spaces to meet 20' setback), located within the R-1 Zoning District (above 150' msl) (staff person: Chambers)

Planning Technician Chambers to amend condition 3: 'As part of the building permit process, repair or replace the paving medium of the driveway, to the satisfaction of the Building Official'.

M/s House/Sisich and passed (5-0) to approve the application with the amended staff condition.

3. **V-0305 – Julie and Mark Anderson, 29 Angela Avenue, APN 5-022-17**, a variance to expand a portion of the garage to within 16' of the front property line (Code: 20') and a variance to add a covered porch to within 4' of the side property line (Code: 8'), located within the R-1 Zoning District. (staff person: Chambers)

M/s House/Sisich and passed (5-0) to approve the application.

4. **V-0306 – Michael and Lisa Mayock, 443 The Alameda, APN 177-131-10 & 11**, a setback variance to enclose a deck within 9'-4" of the front property line (Code: 20') (staff person: Bell)

M/s House/Sisich and passed (5-0) to approve the application.

Chair Harris advised all parties of interest of the 10 day appeal period to the Town Council for the items on the Consent Agenda.

REGULAR AGENDA

5. **V-0301 – Dennis Pufpaf, 71 Elm Avenue, APN 007-052-39**, lot coverage variance to add a 222 square foot addition and remove 288 square feet of decking, reducing the lot coverage from 42% to 41% (Code: 35%). (staff person: Chambers)

Planning Technician Chambers presented the report.

The applicant, Dennis Pufpaf, told the Commission that his neighbors at 57 Elm Avenue and 81 Elm Avenue have reviewed the plans and offered no objections. He presented letters of support to the Committee. Mr. Pufpaf believes that the project will have minimum impact on the neighborhood since the roofline will not change and the deck must be rebuilt because it is old.

In response to Vice Chair Sisich, Mr. Pufpaf said he would have to build upwards or downwards or a combination of both should he not be granted a variance. However, his preference is to extend his single floor house, to include a laundry room off the kitchen. Mr. Pufpaf confirmed he has a registered legal, non-conforming second unit.

Vice-Chair Sisich suggested that the 2-car garage could be reduced in size.

Ms. Chambers confirmed the lot coverage of other properties in the area has not been studied.

The architect for the project, Leo den Ouden, said that the property will remain within its set backs and that that the lot coverage will be slightly reduced. Furthermore, the mass of the building and its

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construction cost will increase if the property is extended by any other means and that he believes the house next door has more mass.

In response, Chair Harris observed that the Commission is constrained by the Law. He suggested the architect show findings that would allow the Commission to approve the application, such as presenting data to show that other homes in the area have large lot coverage.

Commissioner Wittenkeller is in agreement. He suggested the architect work with staff to ascertain average lot coverage in the neighborhood.

Vice Chair Sisich is in agreement, although he believes findings can be made given the reduction, albeit marginal, in lot coverage.

Commissioner House would support the variance if it could be justified and Commissioner Fernandez concurs with the Commissioners.

Chair Harris is sympathetic to the applicant, particularly in view of his owning a second unit, but he is bound by the Law. He suggests the applicant find supporting data that the lot coverage of other properties exceeds the maximum, when he will be able to support the variance.

M/s Harris/Sisich and passed (5-0) to continue the application to 3 March, 2002.

6. U-0301/DR-0303 – Dave Barsochini, 126 Laurel Avenue, APN 007-115-10, use permit to demolish a dwelling and flatland design review of a 1,883 square foot second story on a new dwelling to be 30' in height above average grade, located within the R-1 Zoning District. (staff person: Wight)

Senior Planner Wight presented the Report.

The architect, Edward Hardin, confirmed that the owner accepts staff's conditions.

Lisa Elena Orlowski, of 130 Laurel Ave, explained that she has sick children who require plenty of oxygen. She acknowledges that the owner is accommodating her concerns by offering to move and enlarge the windows of her children's bedroom. However, she would prefer that the second floor be moved back so as not to obstruct her children's room. Ms. Orlowski is concerned that this is the particular area in their house where fresh air blows in.

David Barsocchini, applicant, said that the building can be moved back 3', only, due to a retaining wall and the space needed to walk in front of it. The house would still meet set back requirements.

In response to the owner of 51 Hillside Avenue, Sara Goodwin, Mr. Barsocchini said that an old shed will be removed and that he is aware of a sewer easement on the north side of the property.

Brian Cullen, of 110 Laurel Avenue, supports the application.

Commissioner Fernandez supports the staff report, noting the applicant's efforts to accommodate the neighbors. Commissioner House acknowledges the health issues of the neighbors at 130 Laurel Avenue but is in agreement. She suggests the addition of more windows might mitigate the problem.

Vice Chair Sisich feels that the gap between the buildings is sufficient and the re-positioning of the windows an adequate measure to mitigate the concerns of the owner of 130 Laurel Avenue.

Commissioner Wittenkeller and Chair Harris would support the staff report if the house were moved back 3'.

M/s House/Sisich and passed (3-2 Noes: Harris/Wittenkeller) to move staff report

Chair Harris advised all parties of interest of the 10-day appeal period to the Town Council.

7. ER-0301/PPD-0301/SPD-0301/DR-0304/U-0302 – Coby Friedman, M.B. Ventures, LLC., 790 Sir Francis Drake Blvd., APNs 006-091-02, 34, 35 & 62, Environmental Review, zone change from R-1, R-3 & C-L to PPD/SPD, Use Permit and Design Review to consider 13 residential dwelling units on .87 acres. (staff person: Bell)

Planning Director Bell presented the Staff Report.

In response to Vice-Chair Sisich, Mr. Bell confirmed that the Town Attorney has reviewed the conditions of the geology report that are required by the Director of Public Works.

In response to Commissioner Wittenkeller, Mr Bell confirmed he had reviewed the letter from the Director of Public works regarding the soils report. The Commissioner is concerned that a deflection wall, which would intercept sliding debris, did not appear to be on the plans. Commissioner Wittenkeller said he would never approve the project if he felt people are in jeopardy.

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The architect for the project, Fredric Divine, showed the deflection wall on the plans. He has taken advice from both a respected soils engineer and the Town's peer reviewer and the safety of the site remains the primary concern.

Mr. Divine said that a housing project would have the least traffic impact and access to and from the site has been designed so that it does not flow directly on to Sir Francis Drake Blvd. Furthermore, the traffic report indicates that the project will not significantly add to the number of vehicles on Sir Francis Drake Blvd.

Mr. Divine reports that low-income units have been included in the project and parking requirements have been exceeded.

Earth tones will be chosen for the buildings, for which color charts will be made available when the project next comes before the Commission.

The landscape architect, Pete Petersen, explained that the landscape plans preserve the view from the apartments, whilst providing screening. He plans to use a mix of evergreen and deciduous trees and to plant foliage between the acacia trees on the front of the property. In time, the acacias will be removed when the foliage provides sufficient screening.

Gail Permar, architect, is concerned with the safety features on the site. She believes that retaining walls and structures erected to stabilize the land will be highly visible. She is further concerned for the safety of pedestrians on Sir Francis Drake in the vicinity of the project and suggested the project's owners should contribute towards an overpass at Madrone near Memorial Park to take traffic away from Sir Francis Drake.

Patrick Hayden, of 36 Luna Lane, is also concerned with the safety of the site. He is further concerned with water run-off and drainage from the site, along with the directing of traffic on and off Sir Francis Drake. He also believes the slope on Loma Robles to be particularly steep, adding to the overall unsuitability of the site for a building project.

Johnathan Braun, 479 Scenic Ave, is concerned that the methods employed to make the land suitable for buildings will effect the Town in terms of aesthetics and health and safety. He questions the feasibility of building an intense development on the site. Mr. Brawn does not believe the traffic study provides an accurate estimation of the amount of traffic turning east on Sir Francis Drake from the development. Furthermore, the report does not address the problem of eastbound drivers needing to make a U-turn and he believes the project will add to the traffic congestion at the Hub and on Sir Francis Drake. Mr. Braun noted that the report did not address traffic safety.

Cherilyn Gilboy, of 36 Luna Lane, shares the previous speakers' concerns over traffic and drainage issues. She opposes the repositioning of the fire gate to allow access to the property because the road is very steep and the squeal of tires is audible from her house, which is on the opposite side of the road.

Paula Spencer, 70 Monterey Ave, shares the same concerns as previous speakers with regard to the safety of the site, traffic conditions and aesthetics.

The Architect, Mr. Divine, addressed the issues of the previous speakers. He is confident that the most effective methods are being employed to ensure the stabilization of the hill and that this is the main priority of the project. Furthermore, Mr. Divine will ensure the land is well drained and will deal with any problems that arise in this area.

With reference to the gate, Mr. Divine said that it needs to be moved in order to gain access to the development. However it is being moved only a short distance on a public street. Furthermore, it has the approval of the Fire Marshall.

Mr. Divine notes that traffic reports have to meet professional standards and that the Director of Public Works has reviewed those reports. Mr. Divine believes that the number of trips is insignificant and will have little impact on traffic conditions.

Mr. Divine agrees that safety issues might need addressing on the corner of Los Robles and Sir Francis Drake Blvd, perhaps by making the turning easier or improving visibility. He does not believe that safety issues are connected with the number of cars using the development.

In response to Vice-Chair Sisich, Mr. Divine said that better provision for pedestrian access to and from the development needs to be made, perhaps by moving the stairway. He explained how the results of the traffic survey were arrived at. He further confirmed that traffic would exit the development eastbound on to Sir Francis Drake and then U-turn at some point. Traffic entering would have to make a U-turn at the hub.

In response to Chair Harris, Mr. Divine said that reducing the number of units on the property would not effect the geology insofar as the land needs to be stabilized no matter how much it is developed. He drew attention to the cement catchment wall (in addition to other low walls) that has been included in the plans, which should be well screened with foliage.

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Mr. Harris also questions the inclusion of 3-story housing that incorporates garage space. Mr. Divine explained that that this design would allow for more living space on a smaller footprint. This is necessary in order to accommodate the turn around requirements of the Fire Marshall. Mr. Harris asked the architect of the possibility of cutting deeper into the hillside in order to reduce the height of the dwellings, or if he had considered other methods. Mr. Divine notes that most of the housing is 2-story and that the 25% slope allowed for a third story. Furthermore, the roof pitch is as low as possible.

Mr. Divine replied in the affirmative to Chair Harris' question of whether there would be a homeowners association. He further envisages the affordable units being subject to rent control and not for sale. A subdivision map would need to be submitted, although it would not be a subdivision with public streets.

Commissioner Wittenkeller believes that the next version of the plans should show pedestrian circulation more directly connected to Sir Francis Drake Blvd. Furthermore, drainage from the old slide area needs addressing and the proposed retaining walls on the plans need to be landscaped.

Contrary to the suggestions of the landscape architect, Commissioner Wittenkeller believes that the views from the proposed development are secondary to the views of the site from the surrounding areas. The landscape plan needs revising to reflect these concerns with the primary intent to screen the proposed structures, providing views through framing of screened planting and windows within that planting. In the Commissioner's view, the existing acacia trees are invasive exotics and the planting plan should show those plants being phased out and replaced with other more appropriate plantings.

In response to Chair Harris, Mr. Divine confirmed that distant views from across the valley had not been studied because the project seems to blend into the landscape when viewed at a distance as close as the hub. He acknowledges that the project will be visible from Redhill Shopping Center and the Chair asks that this be addressed. Mr. Divine said that other designs can be considered and the colors darkened. The Chair suggested that a lower duplex be rotated to soften the angle, which Mr. Divine will consider.

Chair Harris is not in favor of white windows.

In response to Commissioner House, Mr. Divine said he would seek advice from an acoustic consultant with regard to her suggestion of sound-proofing barriers. Mr. Petersen notes that safety issues surrounding the lower walls have been addressed.

Commissioner House is further concerned with traffic, drainage and geological issues that have been raised this evening and suggests that the applicant invite a geological engineer to the next hearing to explain these issues in layman's terms.

Mr. Bell said he would ask the Director of Public Works to attend the next hearing of this project to address geology and traffic issues.

M/s House/Sisich and passed (5-0) to continue the application to 3 March, 2003.

E. GENERAL DISCUSSION

1. General Plan discussion.

To be continued to 3 March, 2003.

F. REPORT OF UPCOMING APPEALS TO TOWN COUNCIL

None

The meeting was adjourned at 10pm.


Joanne O'Hehir
Sr. Admin. Services Asst.