

La Jolla Shores Permit Review Committee Minutes

Tuesday April 23, 2013

Committee members in attendance: Helen Boyden (chair), Laura DuCharme-Conboy, Dolores Donovan, Janie Emerson, Tim Lucas, Myrna Naegle, John Schenck. Absent: Phil Merten.

1. Non-Agenda Public Comment – 2 min. each for items not on the agenda

Laura Conboy: La Jolla Historical Society is hosting a young architects camp for middle school to high school children during the summer. There is a one week session for each age group. It will be held at Bishops school. Contact the Historical Society for more information.

2. Chair Comments

- On April 4, the LJCPA approved its President's appeal of 7940 Costebelle to the Planning Commission, no date as yet.
- On April 16 the LJSAB approved the Gaxiola residence. The project approved had been modified from what had been presented to the PRC committee.
- LJS AB agendas have an official posting URL of:
<http://www.sandiego.gov/planning/community/profiles/lajolla/pddoab.shtml>
- The Sudberry project has been deferred to May to resolve some of the cycle issues.
- The Viterbi project will not be heard until some issues are resolved with the City.

3. Project review –

Dimenstein Residence - 8445 La Jolla Scenic Drive

- Project No. 313406
- Type of Structure: Single Family Residence
- Location: 8445 La Jolla Scenic Drive
- Project Manager: Glenn Gargas; 619-446-5245; ggargas@sandiego.gov
- Owner's rep: Scott Spencer; 858-459-8898; scottspencerarchitect@gmail.com

Project Description: Remodel and construct a 6,000 sf two-story addition to a 3,775 sf SFR to total 8,733 sf SFR on a 21,665 sf site at 8445 La Jolla Scenic Drive. Coastal Height Limit and Campus Impact Parking Zones.

The project is seeking: Site Development Permit (SDP)

The chair stated that she lived near the project but not within 300' and walked by it frequently. It would have no effect on her property.

Presented by Scott Spencer, Architect:

What they are proposing is a house somewhat similar to the 2-story house being built next door to the south. They are remodeling the first floor which will have a larger footprint than the present configuration. Much of the increase in space will be from the second floor addition. The proposed project will result in a 7970 sq ft house, plus 750 sq ft garage. There will be 7 bedrooms and 7 parking spaces. There are 3 existing garage spaces accessible from two driveways, which they wish to retain. There will be a green play area on the south side of the house and a swimming pool in the back yard just before the land begins slopes down. The first floor additions are mainly at the northeast section of the lot. Second floor is stepped back from 2' to 4' from first floor for privacy and to soften the lines of the house. The city reviewer pointed out that the planes were softened.

The style of the house is going from a Craftsman/Ranch look to a Mediterranean/Tuscan style with a tile roof.

Elevations were presented to the committee. Rear elevation shows a little courtyard. The pad height will stay the same but the finished floor will be 2" higher.

A materials board was presented. The roof tiles are subdued earth tones and have 3 colors, from red to brown. The stone veneer is earth tone to gray. The stucco is a lighter tan. The window trim is a darker brown to contrast slightly with the stucco.

For drainage, the rooftop water and side yard water will drain to the street in front. For the rear third of the property they will channel the water into the several-lots-long brow ditch system that the neighbors to the south, the Arons also are using. There is 42.4% green landscape. They don't have the complete landscape plan yet and do not know how many of the older trees will remain. They will be preserving one of the large pine trees at the rear.

There is an issue with the city about having 2 curb cuts. The City wants only one curb cut but that will eliminate access to one of the garage parking spaces. The property owner wants to keep the existing 2 curb cuts. **Zachary Dimenstein** (owner): This is a remodel, rather than a complete tear-down and rebuild which was the case with the Aron residence next door, where the city made them eliminate one curb cut. He hopes that they city engineers will let them keep the existing curb cuts as it helps with parking. **Spencer:** They just received these comments back from the city and haven't had a chance to work with the city staff on this issue. If they have to eliminate one curb cut, they will add a fifth parking space in a row facing the south property line midway down the property. The City has asked them to mark out the parking spaces on the site plan.

Committee questions

Conboy: Are you keeping 50% of the existing first floor walls? **Spencer:** No, they are keeping less than 50% of the first floor walls. **Conboy:** If it was 50% then there might be prescriptive rights that would allow them to keep both driveways. They are not in the Coastal Overlay Zone so different rules apply. What is the length of the single car driveway? **Spencer:** The single driveway is 20' from property line, slightly more from sidewalk. But it is in the 20' setback so you can't count the driveway as a parking space. The single curb-cut is 12' wide, the double curb-cut is 14' . **Boyden:** I think that the city code is for 12' maximum width on curb-cuts in Impact Parking Zones. **Emerson:** What would you do to with the parking space if the north curb cut/driveway is closed off? **Spencer:** Remove the garage door and add a window –possibly other enhancements. Couldn't use the space for parking as you can't get to it, unless you do some sort of a jumbled tandem parking scheme, but that isn't allowed in this area.

Boyden: The existing house goes up to north property line. **Spencer:** There is a garden shed that goes to the wall between the properties. That shed will be removed. **Boyden:** What are the side setbacks? **Spencer:**

Current north setbacks: 6.5' at garage, 1' at shed, 15' at rear corner of house

Proposed north setbacks: 6.5' at garage, 6' where shed removed, 4' at midpoint, 8' at the rear corner.

Donovan: Is concerned about the privacy for the neighbors to the north with the second story addition. This addition will tower over the house to the north. **Board discussion ensued:** The neighbors to the north have a partial second story towards the rear and the 2-story element of the proposed house begins about the mid point, so shouldn't be an issue. The neighbor's driveway is next to the property line and their garage and house are 20' away. **Spencer:** They are stepping the second story back 5'. The neighbors have a garden shed that is 3' from property line.

Donovan: The neighbor's (Aron) house on the south has bedrooms at rear. Will there be privacy issues? **Spencer:** They have minimized the windows to the rear. Most are small and up high. The rooms at the rear are bedrooms and bathrooms so they are designing for privacy as well. They will probably use some type of opaque glass or smart glass for bathrooms. **Dimenstein:** He is friends with the Arons. They don't want to look into their windows and vice versa. They are working with the Arons on the window alignment issue. **Colin Hernstad (contractor for the Arons):** Arons are also sensitive to privacy issues. Have installed opaque glass already on many north facing second floor windows, in addition to vegetation and plantings that will help.

Boyden: Have you contacted any of the people on Sugarman Drive or Cranbrook Court? They had concerns about the bluff stability when the Aron project was being reviewed. **Spencer:** No.

Boyden: Do you have the 300' setback survey? **Spencer:** Yes, but only 1 copy. **Boyden:** Can you email the spreadsheet to me for distribution? **Spencer:** Yes. **Boyden:** Neighborhood character photo survey? **Spencer:** Has photos, but not mounted on a board. Can do that for next time.

Lucas: Will the older eucalyptus trees removed? **Spencer:** They have not decided what can stay and what will need to be removed. The city had concerns that some of these trees could have nesting birds. They want a survey of the trees made prior to any removal work. Nesting season is typically April through August.

Lucas: Will you elaborate on the drainage plan? The downslope neighbors had concerns during the Aron project, and there had been some sort of a blowout on the bluff further south. **Spencer:** Retention basin can go to the street. They

are doing a detailed geological report. They are not adding any extra water than is already on the lot. Water from the roof and the side yard will be sent to the street. Water at the rear will feed to the brow ditch to the south and be handled as the Aron's is. Water going to the street needs to be filtered, so there will be some sort of a retention basin in a grassy area for this. **Lucas:** How will you drain the pool for maintenance? **Spencer:** There would have to be some sort of a pump to send the water to the street. They haven't thought about that yet. **Lucas:** Where and how will the pool equipment be sited? With houses so close to the property lines, pool equipment noise could be an issue. **Spencer:** They have not decided yet. They will look into putting it into an enclosure with noise suppression. **Lucas:** Will you be putting down pilings for the pool as it is near where the slope drops off quickly? **Spencer:** They haven't finalized the design of the pool or its depth. Their soils engineer says that they do not need pilings. They will need to do paleontological monitoring during excavation.

Schenck: In the cycles the city had issues about the parking spaces and the driveways. **Spencer:** The city wanted the parking spaces drawn on the plans with dimensions. They also want the north driveway closed. We will be negotiating with the city to try to retain the driveway.

Conboy: Looking at the aerial photo there are many large trees and a garden on the property to the north. With you building a second story will there be any shading issues? Have you talked with the neighbor about that. **Spencer:** They have not talked with the neighbor about this yet - the northern neighbor. **Conboy:** The city cycles noted a small fault running through the property. **Spencer:** Their consultant identified a small fault running through the property. The city geologist has asked our consultant to identify where the fault is on the site plan, and address any issues with the fault. **Conboy:** How will engineer locate the fault? Dig down 25' and inspect it? **Dimenstein:** This is a continuation of a potential fault from other properties. It was extrapolated to show that it continues through the rear (east) 25% of their property at the back bluff. They cannot dig into the bluff. **Spencer:** Once it has been documented on the site plan, and the architects, soils engineers, etc. will have to address it. They city will file a disclaimer, so that the city will not be liable for any damages due to the fault becoming active. Depending on what the geological report says, the pool would be the only structure affected and might need to be reinforced. The house is not affected by the fault.

Emerson: The house on Spindrift that the committee reviewed last year had a guest house that had to be carefully oriented due to a fault. This is a potentially important issue. She also has concerns that the setbacks on the north side property line are too close. She is looking for better setback conformity with the neighborhood.

Boyden: Are you using the same foundation? **Spencer:** With a second story they will have to add deeper footings and deal with side loads. They may have to replace the slab if it can't be reinforced. They are still working on the engineering for this. **Boyden:** The city had an issue with a planter in the right of way. **Spencer:** The planter is existing and is 5' into the right of way. They will most likely do an encroachment maintenance removal agreement. **Boyden:** She has an issue with the size of the house. This is several hundred square feet larger than the Aron house being built and will be the biggest house along this street. She has concerns that each new house is becoming bigger than its neighbor, and that it will have a negative effect on this area.

Naegle: What are your front yard and rear yard setbacks? **Spencer:** The front setback is not changing; it will remain at 28'. The rear setback will be 84'. **Boyden:** How far is the second story from street? **Spencer:** 50'. **Boyden:** This seems to be similar to the Aron house setback.

Public Comment

Burt Lazerow, Sugarman Drive area: What is the greatest extent of the shadow to the property on the north?

Spencer: They have not calculated it. Doing some quick math here – factoring setbacks and eaves heights, and a 45% sun angle, could not see any shadow extending more than 20' on to the neighbor's property during winter maximum. The shadow would be likely much less, this is all an estimate and not scientific. The existing tree probably casts a bigger shadow than the house will.

Board Discussion:

Donovan: She is concerned that La Jolla Shores is losing its character as the houses get progressively larger. The larger houses are closer together; there are sun and shading issues, as well as noise issues. There will be less outdoor space and therefore less outdoor living. That vision of the future is one that the La Jolla Shores PDO was intended to

prevent. **Spencer:** Many of the lots along this street are long and narrow. There really isn't a lot of outdoor space along the sides. The outdoor space is all at the back of the houses, and that is what this design does.

Conboy: Looking at the front elevation you have a 4 in 12 roof pitch. Could you reduce the plate height to lessen the bulk and scale and perhaps cast a smaller shadow? If you have vaulted ceilings you could reduce the roof height and still have the spacious feel inside. **Spencer:** Most of the upper floor is 9' plate except for master bedroom with is 10' plate. No vaulted ceilings. **Conboy:** There is one room shown on the elevation that looks higher? **Spencer:** That is one of the kids' bedrooms with a 9' plate. It should be the same height as the other bedrooms. This could be a drawing error.

Lucas: Do you show the 30' limit on your plans? **Spencer:** Yes, the chimney is 30' and the roofline 28' at highest. The roof averages around 23' for most of the second floor. Finished grade is the same as current, not moving any fill.

Lucas: He is concerned about the older trees on the property due to the designated green belt that runs in the middle of La Jolla Scenic North. He would like to preserve as many as possible.

Motion: Lucas **Second:** Conboy

Continue the item to a future meeting. Would like the following information from the applicant:

- Setback survey with street addresses added and averages provided to committee
- Provide a streetscape showing proposed structure and photos of the other houses. Make a reasonably accurate presentation, and include the 2 houses to the north and the 3 to the south – six in all
- Parking plan with parking spaces identified and measured
- Single curb cut and north driveway issue resolved with the city
- Update on seismic information if available
- Pool equipment location and sound mitigation
- Pool drainage plan
- Will they be adding solar voltaic panels? If so, how will they be situated?
- Landscape plan. What trees will be retained?

Motion carries: 6-0-1

Approve: Conboy, Donovan, Emerson, Lucas, Naegle, Schenck

Oppose: None

Abstain: Boyden (chair)