



**City of Sebastopol**  
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Planning Department  
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**APPROVED DRAFT MINUTES**

TREE/DESIGN REVIEW BOARD  
CITY OF SEBASTOPOL  
MINUTES OF April 6, 2022  
4:00 P.M.

The notice of the meeting was posted on March 31, 2022.

**DESIGN REVIEW BOARD:**

**1. CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Luthin called the meeting to order at 4:00 P.M. and read a procedural statement.

**2. ROLL CALL:**      **Present:**      Ted Luthin, Chair  
   Marshall Balfe, Board Member  
   Christine Level, Board Member  
   **Absent:**      Lars Langberg, Vice Chair  
   Cary Bush, Board Member  
   **Staff:**      Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director  
   John Jay, Associate Planner

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** None.

**4. PLANNING DEPARTMENT UPDATE ON MATTERS OF GENERAL INTEREST:**

Associate Planner Jay advised the Board that they are in the second stage of the Housing Element public outreach and surveys for the public have been posted to the City’s website under the Planning Department’s Housing Element Update.

Director Svanstrom reported that the City Council met on April 5<sup>th</sup> and considered three items: 1) The first reading of an ordinance to ban any new fossil fuel gas stations or expansion of any fossil fuel infrastructure of existing gas stations. The matter will go back to the Council on April 19<sup>th</sup> for a second reading and adoption; 2) The Planning Commission structure, started an ordinance that would revise the out of town geography for the out of town seats, and determined to reduce the number of the Planning Commission to five; 3) The standard conditions of approval was bumped to the Council’s April 19<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Director Svanstrom also reported that they concluded the tribal consultation for the Woodmark Apartments project on March 30<sup>th</sup> and received the application on April 4<sup>th</sup>, which is going through the ministerial process and will be coming the Design Review Board.

The Board asked questions of Director Svanstrom.

**5. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC REGARDING ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA:** None.

**6. STATEMENTS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:** None.

**7. REGULAR AGENDA:**

- A. 911 Litchfield Avenue** – The project for this new single-family dwelling of 1,800 square feet will include a two-car garage, grading work of 335 cubic yards of cut, 85 cubic yards of fill, 250 cubic yards of off-haul, revisions to the existing retaining wall onsite, as well as a new walkway.

Associate Planner Jay indicated that Board Member Bush had recused himself from participating in the public hearing for 911 Litchfield Avenue.

Associate Planner Jay presented the staff report and was available for questions.

The Board had no questions for Associate Planner Jay.

The applicant/owner and architect gave a presentation and were available for questions.

Chair Luthin asked for Board questions of the applicant and architect.

**Ted Luthin, Chair**

What are the materials use on the front entry staircase that is a big component of this?

**Amy Alper, Architect**

That's described on the image sheet. That is picking up the same board form concrete seen at 921 Litchfield at the lower level, and then facing the garage we found concrete tile that mimics board form in the spirit of tying these projects together and grounding the project. At some point the stair past the first landing then becomes supported on a steel riser, so it doesn't ground itself, it's trying to sort of start floating up to the top of that deck. We had to change those support walls just a bit from the rendering, but anything under the landing and under the stairs is trying to be as light as possible and let the view and landscape through, and just have the visitor sort of being engaged sweeping above and around a garden hillside on the way to the front door.

**Ted Luthin, Chair**

And what are you thinking about for a railing on that staircase?

**Amy Alper, Architect**

A metal railing for maintenance. We found a company that provides components and they have a guardrail with an integral light to it, so all the lights coming down. Again, the conundrum with an open stair is that there's no place to get step lights or anything in there, but obviously we want to light the stairs. All the path lighting in general in the garden for economic reasons is trying to be attached to the house and throw light onto paths around the house, and then some sconces, etc., and all night sky focused light.

**Ted Luthin, Chair**

And then the railing on the rooftop deck over the garage?

**Amy Alper, Architect**

Also metal vertical uprights with a metal top cap. The infill at the deck at the garage is meant to be glass, and we have glass infill on the deck at 921 Litchfield. The stair itself though will be very light cable rail, and the focus in terms of the metal is all about long-term maintenance.

**Ted Luthin, Chair**

Where do guests park for this property?

**Amy Alper, Architect**

The existing road is such that you could have someone park, and with 921 Litchfield still coming by, at least for the near future Stephen's property is such that there are two guest slips that could also be accessed. I'm assuming he's willing to share with his mom. In terms of other related planning requirements, there is no other way to make the site work. The garage has two slips, so a guest can certainly come in and park in the garage.

**Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director**

If it isn't the family and it's different owners, unless it specifies in the easement to include parking it generally does not include parking, but Litchfield Avenue itself has public parking on it, and I believe the design is actually modifying so that there is a distinguishable way to walk up to the house as well.

**Ted Luthin, Chair**

Sounds good, and this one is fairly close to Litchfield, so parking out on the street wouldn't be that big of a deal.

**Peggy Leander, Applicant/Owner**

There's the long expanse along the road where my property is.

**Ted Luthin, Chair**

Yes, for parallel parking there.

Chair Luthin asked for additional Commissioner questions. Hearing none, he closed the public comment.

The Board discussed the application as follows:

**Marshall Balfe, Board Member**

I didn't find anything to question on this project. It is an excellent design and it's very appropriate to the site. I'm looking at the bigger picture usually, and I think it's very well done, so I have not much to say. I don't have any questions or criticisms and I feel we should approve it.

**Christine Level, Board Member**

I, too, think it's a very nice design. I appreciate the work that Amy has put into it. My only concerns on this project would be in relationship to the site drainage and the easement issues, and in reading the staff report it seems like attention has been paid to that and it's been dealt with, but that would be my biggest issue, that Engineering has a good look at the drainage.

**Ted Luthin, Chair**

I agree. I think the design is shoehorning a house into a very challenging piece of property. I did a lot of work in the open hills after the fire, so I understand hillside construction and I really don't want to know what you're retaining wall is going to cost. I think it's a nice design that compliments the house next door nicely. The only place I was a little bit concerned is the one wall on the front right of the house; I think it's the wall of the walk-in closet for the primary bedroom and the laundry room. It's kind of a big, blank wall. I know we've got an ginko tree planted there that's going to screen that, and I know that the idea is that your eye is going to shift over to the front door and the deck over the garage, but it may not be a horrible thing to get a high window in that closet. But other than that, I think it's a lovely design and I'm all for it.

**Amy Alper, Architect**

Thank you for that comment. We were planning on skylighting the closet just to maximize wall space. I think it's understandable that in this size house the thing that is always sacrificed is storage, circulation, that kind of thing, and really the hope for that wall was always that the shadow, which won't always be in shadow, of the tree would be against the backdrop of the house. The blank wall was not done without thought; it was just meant to be a potential backdrop for landscape that would come.

**Ted Luthin, Chair**

Sounds good. I appreciate that.

**John Jay, Associate Planner**

I wanted to make sure we open this for public comment.

**Ted Luthin, Chair**

I'm sorry, I should have gone back to my agenda.

Chair Luthin opened public comment. Seeing none, he closed public comment.

Chair Luthin asked the Board for a motion.

Board Member Level moved to approve the application as submitted, with the stipulation that Engineering is satisfied with the drainage on the property.

Board Member Balfe seconded the motion.

AYES: Chair Luthin and Board Members Balfe and Level  
NOES: None  
ABSTAIN: None  
ABSENT: Vice Chair Langberg, Board Member Bush  
RECUSED: None.

- B. DESIGN REVIEW: 700 Gravenstein Highway North** – Starbucks is requesting Design Review approval for their new location at 700 Gravenstein Highway North. The proposal includes modifications to the exterior, which also include the relocation of the current drive-through window, restriping the parking lot, new roof, parapet caps, new paint, new landscape, and outdoor dining.

Associate Planner Jay presented the staff report and was available for questions.

The Board had no questions for Associate Planner Jay.

The applicant gave a presentation and was available for questions.

Chair Luthin asked for Board questions of the applicant or staff.

**Christine Level, Board Member**

I think one of the big issues on this proposal is the parking, the loss of net one parking place.

**John Jay, Associate Planner**

Yes, there was a reduction in parking, which the Planning Commission did approve. For that though they're revising the way that the parking and drive-through exit operate, because its current orientation and operation doesn't make sense at all. You enter that parking area almost through the drive-through, so the changes that they are proposing increases the safety of that parking area, however, it does reduce the parking stalls by one, and that's where the Planning Commission requested additional bicycle parking, because there is a transit stop close by as well as some trails and stuff like that where people are walking or cycling in.

**Elizabeth Valerio, Starbucks**

The impact of reducing that one parking space shouldn't be very noticeable, but we're happy to add the additional bike racks.

**Christine Level, Board Member**

Where is this bicycle parking?

**Elizabeth Valerio, Starbucks**

We usually locate five racks in front or in and around a property, so this would be the entrance. We can locate it around here or this area. I don't know, Jay, if there are any specific location requirements from Planning, but we're open to locating the bike racks wherever it's required.

**Christine Level, Board Member**

So right now on this plan there are no bike racks shown?

**Elizabeth Valerio, Starbucks**

No.

**Christine Level, Board Member**

What constitutes bicycle parking? You could have a rack and put in ten bikes. I see bicycles piled up next to each other. If Planning wants four bicycle parking spots, what does that mean? Does that mean four little racks? It's not like car parking that has a designated size?

**Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director**

We actually do, Christine. Our code specifies the U-loops, the upside down U that are a tubular three inches of galvanized steel. I believe that's what we use as our bicycle parking standard, and each of those would constitute two spaces, because you can do one bicycle on each side. Then obviously it needs to be done in a way that you could fit the bicycle. You can't hang it over into the drive-through and parking areas. Generally we would ask the applicant to propose that based on regulations.

**Elizabeth Valerio, Starbucks**

That's fine. Of course we can't impede any path of travel, but we try to locate it in close proximity to the entrance and near the parking spaces, so we could definitely find a spot.

**Ted Luthin, Chair**

I think that would be great, and a nice visible spot would be great, because I know we have an issue with bikes disappearing. There was also a note from the Planning Commission talking about some sort of safe path of travel from that parking lot in the upper left-hand side of this plan across. Is that doable?

**Elizabeth Valerio, Starbucks**

We could stripe a walking path. We do have a handicapped accessible parking stall and path here. I'm not sure what we can do to help pedestrians walk towards here. I understand what the Planning Commissioner would like us to do, and it would be ideal, but I'm not sure if we do the striping if the customers will even follow the path. If you see the current layout, the drive-through kind of dives into the existing parking here, and then you'll have people going into the parking space and drive-through coming out at the same time, so it's kind of a messy spot here. What we did is we closed it off and created an island or a little block here that separates the parking, so it's really easier for the cars to go in here and out without impeding too much into the drive-through area. Walking-wise, I guess we could put a little cross path here that shows customer path of travel. I don't want to say crosswalk, but like a striped path to show the path from the parking lot down to this area. But again, it's not a building code regulation, so I'm not quite how best to stripe that without the Building Department getting confused on what we're showing.

**Ted Luthin, Chair**

After looking at this plan I would be more concerned if that parking area was larger or connected to the greater parking area, but being that it is just a dead end for the small lot of its own, there's not going to be a ton of in and out. I'm guessing most of your guests that park are going to park either in those four spaces by your accessible parking or in those spaces across the way. That's where I would park, because I'd probably come in that driveway on the far right and jump into one of those spaces before I'd ever park in that lot. I guess I'm not that concerned. There's not going to be a ton of traffic coming through that driveway where your number 30 is there, and there are large gaps in the traffic leaving your drive-through. Just by the nature of the drive-through there's a lot of start, stop, gap, before the next car comes. The transaction has to take place, which gives someone ample time to cross that driveway pretty safely.

**Elizabeth Valerio, Starbucks**

It's something that I know the Planning Commission has noted as part of the conditions, so we could try to come up with a creative way of showing a path. But again, that's something that we have to work through at this point.

**Ted Luthin, Chair**

I don't think that is a huge concern for me. It would be nice to see the bicycle parking, but I'll leave that up to you and staff, but I think this is a nice solution for breathing new life into a building that's long overdue for a facelift.

**Marshall Balfe, Board Member**

This division in the site plan between the driveway into the parking lot and the cars coming out, is that a curb that's in there, or is that a painted line on the asphalt?

**Elizabeth Valerio, Starbucks**

I believe this is a curb.

**Marshall Balfe, Board Member**

I was thinking at a certain point it just becomes something to trip over, and I had a thought that perhaps the curb could come out as far as that car on the drawing that's sitting there at the drive-through window, but then beyond that it could be a painted stripe, because all these people in the little parking lot there are coming and going and they could walk straight onto that outdoor dining area without tripping over a curb.

**Elizabeth Valerio, Starbucks**

The curb should be high enough and wide enough to be visible. I don't think they'll trip over it, but I understand your concern. We'll make sure that it's safe.

**Ted Luthin, Chair**

Similar to that, the landscape drawing shows some sort of little plants in there. I think it would be my preference just to have a concrete path. I don't think you're going to get anything to grow in there.

Chair Luthin asked for public comment. Seeing none, he closed public comment.

The Board discussed the application as follows:

**Christine Level, Board Member**

I believe we did a sign program for this whole complex there not too long ago, so I'm assuming at this point we're not asking anything about any type of signage, we're just approving the building itself?

**Ted Luthin, Chair**

That's a good question for our applicant. Is signage included in this application? Is what we're seeing what is being proposed?

**Elizabeth Valerio, Starbucks**

We did include signage, but we did not include detail. My understanding was it was under separate permit. If I can include it as part of this permit package that would be great, but I think I'm supposed to separate it.

**Marshall Balfe, Board Member**

I think it's separate in the paperwork. It says that it's separate.

**John Jay, Associate Planner**

Yes, as the application came in there was no signage details or sign application applied for. It was just the standalone building with the modifications to the exterior, the drive-through window, and the parking. So, yes, Christine, they would submit a sign package that would be consistent with the sign program for the Redwood Marketplace shopping center.

**Christine Level, Board Member**

I thought that was the case, but I just wanted to confirm. Additionally, in the package it was discussing the three items that were coming from Planning. One was the bicycle parking, two was the path of travel, and three was electric car charging stations. These are just suggestions from Planning. Are we supposed to talk about them? What's supposed to happen, because we didn't discuss electric car charging stations?

**Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director**

Just to give some context, this is considered a little bit of a major remodel, and so the Planning Commission was reviewing the conditional use permit that was required for the modifications to the drive-through and the parking reductions, and as part of that there are a couple of things they were considering. One is there is some pretty extensive work that's going to happen; they're moving the kitchen and everything around on the interior, so at what point do we try to include some of those best practice environmentally friendly requirements that we have in our code for new construction? In this case, given the fact that they're also reducing parking, the four spaces of bicycle parking is a City requirement, and so that is a minimum, but they encouraged adding more. It is right next to the West County Trail and that's where the green bicycle lanes are all the way along Gravenstein Highway, so I would call it a strong suggestion. They didn't require it in case it did not fit, and I was actually hoping we'd have maybe some options to look at today with this, but I'm glad Elizabeth is willing to work on this and figure out how to do this. The same thing with the EV chargers. If it were a new development it would be required to have EV chargers, so they did want to see, assuming it was feasible, that that be included in the project, and I think Elizabeth also indicated at that meeting that including it as a... Well, I don't want to speak for you, Elizabeth. Do you just want to respond?

**Elizabeth Valerio, Starbucks**

My understanding was that as long as it was included as part of our building permit set that that should be fine. I was waiting for both Planning Commission approval with conditions and Design Review Board approval with conditions to incorporate all that into our final construction permit set. What I could do is share that with Planning prior to submitting if you want to take a look at the location of the bike rack, the EV charging station, or parking. Then we did discuss a little bit more on the path from the former parking to the entrance. If the intent of the Planning Commission is to look for a visible or visual path, then we could figure out a way to stripe, but that's something that we will definitely incorporate into our final permit set.

**Christine Level, Board Member**

Getting back to my comment, what is the role of the Board at this point for these three items? Are we just supposed to comment on them? It sounds like they're going to be included anyway. What is our purpose here right now regarding these three items, Kari.

**Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director**

The Planning Commission did not want to step on the DRB's toes when it comes to where and how that might be on the site if Elizabeth came back and the plans are saying no, it's not feasible to be able to discuss that with the Design Review Board as the more site plan approval oriented body, so you don't need to do anything with it, Christine. If you wanted to, you could increase the number of bicycle parking spaces without understanding how it would fit in the site. I understand it's kind of hard to do. If you've added a condition that you think it should be a minimum of six, but they can only fit four, now they have to come back to you to amend that, so it's probably fine to leave these as is, but they did want you guys all to have an opportunity that if you felt strongly about any of them to comment or include those in your conditions of approval.

**Christine Level, Board Member**

I wouldn't require more bicycle spaces, but I think it is probably going to be a bike-friendly operation just given its location and how people travel around town, so I think it would be beneficial for the business itself to have more bike parking, because I think it would get used. In terms of electric car charging stations, I personally don't understand that at all, because I think it takes too long to charge a car. Coffee shop buyers are not going to be



charging their car there; I can't imagine that would happen. They're not there long enough, but that's just my comment on that. And the travel pathway, I see the potential issue, but I don't see how it gets changed on that site. I think let the traveler beware and cross carefully.

**Ted Luthin, Chair**

I think that's probably accurate, and Christine, I feel exactly the same way.

**Marshall Balfe, Board Member**

I agree with Christine about the bicycles and the car charging.

**Ted Luthin, Chair**

So it sounds like our Board is in agreement here.

Chair Luthin moved to approve the project as submitted with terms and conditions forwarded from the Planning Commission.

Board Member Level seconded the motion.

AYES: Chair Luthin, Board Members Balfe and Level

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: Vice Chair Langberg, Board Member Bush

**8. DISCUSSION:** None.

**9. SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES**

**Director Svanstrom**

Design Review Subcommittee. The Standard Conditions were scheduled for the City Council's April 5<sup>th</sup> meeting but will instead be presented at the City Council's April 19<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**John Jay, Associate Planner**

Sebastopol met its RHNA allocation numbers for housing requirements for 2021.

**10. ADJOURNMENT:** Chair Luthin adjourned the meeting at 5:15 p.m. The next regularly scheduled Tree/Design Review Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 20, 2022 at 4:00 P.M.