

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING of the ROSS ADVISORY
DESIGN REVIEW GROUP
and
PUBLIC WORKSHOP ON ATTICS AND BASEMENTS
TUESDAY, JANUARY 25, 2011
Ross Town Hall

1. **Commencement.**

Jim Kemp, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. Jim Kemp, Mark Fritts, Josepha Buckingham, Dan Winey and Noreen Slivon were present. Elise Semonian, senior planner, was also present.

2. **Approval of Minutes for October 2010.**

The ADR approved the minutes of the October 2010 meeting.

3. **Open Time for Public Expression.**

No one wished to comment during the open time.

4. **19 Woodside Way, Addition and Remodel, No. 1816, Todd and Julie Boes, 19 Woodside Way, A.P. 73-252-03, R-1:B-6 (Single Family Residence, 6,000 sq. ft. minimum lot size), Medium Density (6-10 units per acre).**

Addition and significant remodel to the residence that would require an application for design review and a setback variance. The project includes reconstruction of the attached garage and a new second story addition. Total floor area of 4,524 square feet is proposed. A variance is requested in order to maintain the existing encroachment into the northwest side yard for a new entry patio and covered entry porch (15 feet required, approximately 8 feet existing and proposed).

Lot area	23,516 sq. ft.	
Existing Floor Area	12.6%	
Proposed Floor Area	19.2%	(20% permitted)
Existing Lot Coverage	18.0%	
Proposed Lot Coverage	18.4%	(20% permitted)

The existing residence is nonconforming in setbacks.

Applicant Julie Boes was present with project architect Wendy Posard. Ms. Posard described the project. Neighbors Charlie and Marji Evans, 17 Woodside, wished to support their neighbors in their property improvement, but believed the proposed second floor addition did not comply with purposes and criteria of the Town design review chapter and could adversely affect the pleasure and enjoyment of their property by impacting their privacy and light. Karen Evans noted that it was a big change. Stephanie Lamar, 11 Woodside, was also present to obtain information on the project and express concern for the loss of the forest view.

The ADR Group noted that a one-story design did not make design sense for the site. However, they were concerned with the impacts the second floor addition would have on the neighbor.

ADR Recommendations (Buckingham, Fritts, Kemp, Slivon, Winey):

- Architect should consider the story poles from the Evans' site and impacts on their light, privacy and views.
- Stair tower element should be eliminated to reduce impact to neighbor.

5. 7:00 P.M. Community Workshop on Potential Changes to Town Regulations To Allow Finished Basements and Attics.

Councilmember Rupert Russell lead a public workshop on his 2010-2011 Council goal of considering modifications to the Town policies regarding improvement of attics and basements. The workshop included discussion of a proposal to permit residents to finish off existing attic and basement spaces so long as there are no material impacts for neighbors.

Senior Planner Elise Semonian summarized the existing regulations and issues staff encounters with basements an attics. Councilmember Russell invited the workshop participants to comment on the proposal. Comments received included:

- Work within existing regulations and establish new criteria and clear guidelines for basement and attic proposals. Different tiers of review may be used based on compliance with the criteria.
- Allow improvement of existing spaces that add no new mass, lot coverage or visual impact. Many of these areas are currently used, although not finished.
- Parking impacts should be considered. Sites must have adequate parking. The Town should consider the impact of improvements that could create more parking demand. Consider impacts of parking requirements on historic character.
- Improvements must meet building code requirements and safety standards. The owner and community both benefit from houses that are upgraded to modern health and safety codes.
- Concerns were expressed regarding the current system that permits neighbors to veto a project.
- Finished attics and basements would improve the value of the residence and also surrounding homes.
- Improvements may increase assessed values and tax revenue to the Town.
- Consider fairness of changing the rules for residents. Consider issues with applying rules differently to existing residences versus new projects, or smaller lots and homes versus larger lots and homes.
- Avoid McMansions and overbuilding lots. Consider additional floor area and volume that is created and the cumulative impacts to the Town. Some limit to basement areas, house size and soil removal may be appropriate.
- Some exterior changes may be positive. Some exterior changes may impact neighbors.
- Consider the General Plan and Housing Element and if changes to allow finished basements and attics will be comply with these documents or if amendments would be necessary.
- Reconsider the zoning of parcels where the minimum lot size does not reflect size of lots in the zoning district.
- Require removal of illegal construction and increase town enforcement of building violations.

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- Consider garages and making them available for parking. Reconsidering parking and covered parking requirements.
- Consider treating hillside areas differently.

The majority of the public present at the workshop (approximately 37 people) was supportive of changing the Town regulations to improve spaces where there are no material impacts for neighbors. Staff was directed to draft new policies or regulations that would ultimately allow more finished attic and basement spaces where they have no material impacts for neighbors. The draft will be prepared within four weeks and circulated before holding a second workshop. If consensus is reached on the draft, the draft would be presented to the Town Council for consideration.

6. Adjournment.

Councilmember Russell adjourned the public workshop at 9:00 p.m.