

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
ROSS ADVISORY DESIGN REVIEW GROUP
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2014
Ross Town Hall, Ross

1. 7:00 p.m. Commencement

Chris Neumann, Chair, called the meeting to order. ADR members Jim Kemp, Mark Fritts and Peter Nelson were also present. Elise Semonian, Senior Planner, was present for town staff.

2. Open Time for Public Comments No one wished to comment during open time.

3. Approval of Minutes No minutes were approved.

4. Discussion of Town Hall window replacement project

Town Manager Rob Braulik presented the project. He indicated council approved funding to replace the windows in Town Hall. Some of the windows cannot shut properly since they are warped. He took a proposal to the council to replace the windows. They would not replace the half moon portion of the windows, but would replace the long windows below and the windows in the office areas. The windows are single pane and not green energy. They have problems with town office windows including mold and mildew town employees have been dealing with for years. He is asking the council to consider investing dollars into maintenance and repairs of town infrastructure. Ross has the smallest staff of any community in Marin County. He factors in their ability to build the capital item and then keep the capital improvement maintained.

There are only two public works maintenance staff full time and they are going full bore on basic Town maintenance. He is factoring in the wear and tear of the windows and keeping them properly maintained. The windows are wood on the inside and outside. From a maintenance standpoint he is considering aluminum cladding on the outside and wood on the inside. The mullions on the windows at the bottom and the top are wood and they have rotted in certain cases and have to be replaced. They are not considering vinyl windows. The project is budgeted and he needs to go before the council and get a contract awarded. He wanted to ask ADR for their opinion and will present it to council. He talked to many window companies and has been told they will not be able to tell the difference between the aluminum clad finish on the outside and the wood on the inside.

Mark Fritts asked if the windows will be true divided lights and the manager responded they would be divided lights. He also asked if they would be able to match the width of the current mullions and mutttons. Jim Kemp asked if the new windows would be single or double pane and the town manager indicated they would be double pane.

Peter Nelson commented the use of the chambers and the offices are different. The windows in the chambers are rarely open and may not need to be operable. He asked if that had been considered. The manager said the windows have been open during meetings before.

The manager indicated the project also includes repainting. He said the chambers area at certain times of the day is not usable due to direct sunlight bearing through the windows (there are no window shades) because of the lack of window coverings and they will be adding window coverings on the lower portion of the windows in the future.

Jim Kemp has had a lot of experience with windows of historical context. The mullions and muntins are very thin. Windows used to be made this way. He recommended the windows be replicated and match the all the details including the sash and muntins. They must match the transom, the arch shape window above, in style and size. It is very difficult to do. Window manufacturers may not guarantee the window if it is a custom width. He was not opposed to use of aluminum cladding and different materials but recommended solid wood windows. Typically ADR requires one whole sash to review. He recommended the town ask bidders to produce a single whole sash that everyone can look at to see if it is acceptable or not. Wood windows will last as long if well made and maintained. He would go with double pane windows.

Peter Nelson asked for the amount of the bids the town had received. The manager indicated approximately \$50,000 for wood/wood replacement and \$50,000 for wood (aluminum clad)/wood replacement. No outside third party bid was sought for fixing the existing windows. The ADR Group suggested the manager get ADR comments on the shop drawings he may receive.

Chris Neumann commented on the inconsistency in the details of the hand railings in front of Town Hall with the new railings installed as part of the ADA improvements connected to the SFD/Lagunitas project. Therefore, he recommended having consistency with the details of the windows.

Peter Nelson indicated he spoke with one of the staff doing the handrail installation and it may have cost the same or less to match the old railings instead of using the metal tube railings. The manager indicated the railings referenced with the SFD/Lagunitas project was designed and approved several years ago and just installed recently.

Elise Semonian, Senior Planner, indicated the building is a locally historic structure and the project cannot be considered exempt from environmental review under CEQA unless the project is consistent with the Secretary of Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic buildings. The Standards would recommend repair over replacement and maintaining the single pane windows and wood, since double pane windows and cladding would not have been used when the structure was built.

The ADR asked if the town investigated repair of the windows. The manager indicated the cost of new windows was similar to the cost of repairing. The new windows would lower energy use.

Peter Nelson indicated seismic safety should be considered too.

Mark Fritts was comfortable replacing the windows with a more modern window and noted double panes in the office and the south facing windows would be noticeable. However, he could not comment on CEQA. The manager indicated the town attorney in an email indicated CEQA exemptions would apply to the project.

The ADR had a mix of comments on the windows, but ADR Recommended:

- All Wood material is preferable, but aluminum exterior is acceptable.
- Two members had a preference to repairing the existing windows versus complete replacement in the main town hall room and would be more flexible for replacement in the office area.
- The ADR strongly recommended ensuring the window detail is kept exactly the same, particularly when it comes to the width of the mullions and muntins and true divided lites.
- The ADR strongly recommending requiring the window supplier to create a sample sash to ensure the windows can be made to specifications.
- If council prefers to maintain historical context and considers the building historical, then single pane windows are preferred. However, double pane windows would be acceptable to reduce heating/cooling load. However, heating/cooling load will be affected even more by planned window coverings.

5. Review of Sir Francis Drake/Lagunitas Road Intersection Bus Shelter Plans

Review of Marin Transit plans for new bus shelters for the Sir Francis Drake Boulevard and Lagunitas Road intersection. The project replacing the existing bus shelter on the west side of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard and the installation of a new shelter at the bus stop on the east side of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, in the right-of-way adjacent to the Marin Art & Garden Center. The ADR Group will review the design and color of the proposed shelters and provide comments to staff.

The ADR group considered the design and proposed color, including the option of using a brown paint similar to the Ross town signs. The ADR group felt the dark green color selected by the transit agency may be more affordable and easier for the agency to maintain in the future.

ADR members asked about the newspaper racks. Councilmember Kuhl believed there may be first amendment issues in removing them. Staff suggested considering upgraded racks to improve the appearance of the area.

The ADR group supported the new bus stop design and recommended the dark green finish.

6. 14 Upper Ames, second unit

Owner: Ariel and Rebecca Nessen
Design Professional: Building Solutions, Inc.
Location: 14 Upper Ames Avenue
A.P. Number: 73-181-28
Zoning: R-1:B-20 (Single Family Residence, 20,000 sq. ft. minimum lot size)
General Plan: Low Density (1-3 units per acre)
Flood Zone: Zone X (outside high risk flooding area)

Review of plans for a 440 square foot second unit addition that would require Town Council approval of design review and second unit exceptions. The applicants propose a new second unit above the existing garage, within required yard setbacks. The project also includes a request for setback variances to build a new pool deck south of the pool, over existing pool equipment.

Lot Area	17,367 square feet
Existing Floor Area Ratio	4,071 sq. ft. 23.4%
Proposed Floor Area Ratio	4,511 sq. ft. 26.0% (15% permitted*)
Existing Lot Coverage	3,278 sq. ft. 18.9%
Proposed Lot Coverage	3,387 sq. ft. 19.5% (15% permitted)
Existing Impervious Surfaces	8,705 sq. ft. 50.1%
Proposed Impervious Surfaces	8,705 sq. ft. 50.1%

*The Council may grant 500 square feet of additional floor area for new second units that are rent-restricted for a very low income households (Ross Municipal Code Section 18.42.065).

Project designer Mark Bruce was present with the property owners. The materials will match existing. Existing five parking spaces comply with the required parking for a residence and second unit. Chris Neumann noted there is no parking in the neighborhood.

The group distinguished this project from the proposal considered at 15 Brookwood due to the topography, parking, location of neighbors, less visibility from the street, larger site and design that integrated with the existing residence. In addition, the project was not opposed by neighbors.

The ADR group discussed the design and materials and supported the deck design as proposed based on the location of existing improvements and made the following recommendations regarding the second unit:

- Continue the style, details and materials from the main residence, particularly on the gable
- Add landscaping on the corner to significantly screen the existing garage and new unit from views from the road

- Integrate the stairs to match the character of the building, consider attaching it to the house

7. Community Workshop on the 2015-2023 Town General Plan Housing Element

Community workshop to solicit ideas and input regarding the update of the Town of Ross Housing Element. Specifically, staff is requesting comments and any suggested additions to the current housing element policies and the current available land inventory for new units. The Housing Element will replace the 2009-2014 update, which is available at http://townofross.org/pdf/resource_center/housing-element-adopted-november-2010.pdf. The Housing Element is an element of the Town General Plan to facilitate the improvement and development of housing for all economic segments of the community. The document reviews community goals, policies and programs for housing as well as the economic, environmental, and fiscal factors involved in addressing state housing goals and regional housing needs. The Housing Element identifies potential housing sites for the Town’s share of the Regional Housing Need, which is a minimum of 18 housing units at all income levels. The current Housing Element will be updated and revised following the community workshop and will be presented to the Town Council at a public hearing.

The following ideas were brought up at the workshop (not necessarily recommendations of the Advisory Design Review Group):

- Remove the Bald Hill sites from the inventory since it is a priority for open space and has access and water supply issues.
- There has been council discussion about selling off for private development a portion of the Town Hall site that is currently designated for up to 4 affordable units. Since this is a Town-owned site and under Town control, it is the most promising site for development of affordable housing. The Town should maintain the policy and programs regarding 37 Sir Francis Drake and the program to pursue a partner for its development for affordable housing. Consider expanding the zoning to the adjacent single-family residential site to encourage up to eight affordable units to be created. The Town should include redevelopment of the site for affordable housing in the \$8,000 analysis council commissioned to determine the potential economic and fiscal impacts of the area.
- Since the Branson School is considering moving the school out of Town, the Town should consider its future redevelopment. The site is zoned for low density residential and is at the maximum floor area. The Town should consider potential redevelopment of the Branson School and permitting additional density for additional, small, residences for senior housing to allow residents to downsize and remain in the community.

8. Adjournment

Chris Neumann adjourned the meeting.