

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF
THE LITCHFIELD PARK DESIGN REVIEW BOARD**

February 4, 2021

I. Call to Order

The meeting was held online via Zoom and called to order by Chair Charnetsky at 7:03 p.m.

Present: Chair Charnetsky; Vice Chair Ledyard; and Boardmembers Clair, and Dudley.

Absent: Boardmember O'Connor.

Staff Present: Jason Sanks, Planning Consultant; Pam Maslowski, Director of Planning Services; and Stephanie Irwin, Accounting Specialist.

II. Business

A. Design Plans for a Roof Mounted Solar Panel Installation Proposed for 982 E. Acacia Circle

Mr. Sanks stated that the applicant is requesting approval of their plans for locating solar panels on the flat roof of the residence. He read the Zoning Code requirements for locating solar panels on flat roofs, and stated that it appears, from the exhibits provided, that the tilted panels will not be screened by a parapet wall. The technical documents provided by the applicant show a 12" tall tilted array. However, they also provided a photo that shows the array could be as tall as 20". Based on that, there is some concern. The Board does have some discretion regarding tilted panels on a flat roof that are not completely screened. If the applicant can convey that the panels will be screened from view, Staff could be supportive of the application.

Laurel Lundeen noted that she represents Eros Energy, the contractor that will be installing the panels. They did realize that the panels will be on the flat portion of the roof and not surrounded by the parapet wall. Upon looking at Google images and information provided by one of their Staff members, they feel that the array will not be visible from the street or the golf course. Chair Charnetsky noted that the photo example shows a tilted panel on a pitched roof and the other photo shows a measurement of the leg at 20". She did look at the house and it looks like the highest part of the parapet is towards the front of the house and appears to be 12" or so. That height will become less as it goes up to the higher part of the roof. The questions are how high the panel will be tilted and if it can be reduced so that the height will be 12" or less. From the street perspective, the Board has allowed panels to be above the height of the parapet a bit if it cannot be seen from a pedestrian vantage point. Ms. Lundeen stated that a tech measured the parapet height and it was 23", where the parapet wall is available. The tilt system will be fairly accurate to the pictures supplied. If they lower the tilt, it could greatly affect the production and the system will not be as effective for the homeowner. Chair Charnetsky pointed out that the mounting detail on Sheet 2 indicates a height of 12" maximum and asked if that was correct. Ms. Lundeen replied that her install manager was wary when he put that on there. It will probably exceed 12". They can change the plans. She does not think they can take it down to a 12" tilt and still have the production the customer is expecting. She has been told that, even at the tilt as pictured, it will still not be visible from the street.

Boardmember Dudley inquired if the tilt will be to the south which is the front of the residence. Chair Charnetsky confirmed that was correct. Boardmember Dudley noted that, looking at the top down view, there is a pitched roof that will cover a lot of the cells even if the parapet is not high enough. She would expect that the panels would not be visible from the street based on how far back they are. It does look like the meters are located in the front. Chair Charnetsky noted that there are three service

panels that are connected by conduit and then they are connected to the roof. It does not seem like the conduit is concealed. Ms. Lundeen stated they can paint the conduit to match the face of the house. They will enclose the wire into the conduit and then paint it so it will not be as visible. Boardmember Dudley pointed out that the google street view also shows some type of window air conditioner unit sticking out of the wall and it looks like there are plans to put other types of equipment there. She is concerned that it will look somewhat industrial. She wonders why the contractor chose the front elevation and whether they can be moved. Chair Charnetsky noted that there is a 0' lot line on the one side so they might not have access. The other one is pretty far away from the electrical meter. It will start looking somewhat cluttered to put a number of boxes and conduit there, even if they are painted to match the house. In response to a question, Ms. Lundeen replied that the combiner box is about 8" by 12" and 3" to 4" deep. That is the largest box. It appears that the homeowner will be getting a main panel upgrade where the new service entrance will go on one side and the rest will go around the corner. Further discussion was held regarding disguising or relocating the boxes and conduit. Ms. Lundeen noted that everything can be painted to match the house except the meter and the combiner box. The Combiner box will be a silver color. The conduit and the rest of the boxes can be painted to match the house. Boardmember Clair stated that it appears that there is another conduit running along the wall on the left side of the house. Adding another conduit will really make it look cluttered.

Chair Charnetsky noted that she is not sure if the top row of the array will be visible. The plans submitted state the panel heights are 12", but the solar representative is saying that they are not 12" so it is not certain what the height is. It was said that the panels will not show; however, what will happen if they do. She asked if the panels could be adjusted if they show after they are installed. Ms. Lundeen replied that the panels cannot be adjusted after they are installed. If they lower them, it will affect the production of the system.

Boardmember Clair commented that the Code requires the panels be screened and the parapet wall is only 12" high in parts of the roof. There is an application noting that the height of the panels will be 12". However, the applicant's representative is now saying that they will be higher than 12", and there is no way to lower the height to 12" without it not being as effective as the way they sold it. There is a discrepancy, and this application is not valid. Ms. Lundeen noted that she can have the plant re-design the plans so it does not note 12", and she can confirm as to how low the panels can be. Boardmember Dudley stated that it can be calculated as to whether these panels will be seen from the street. Chair Charnetsky pointed out that the Code does not specify that the panels must be lower than 12". It notes that they should not be visible from the street. She is concerned with the discrepancy on the height. If the panels are visible from the street after they are installed, there will be no recourse. Vice Chair Ledyard stated that, under the law, the Board has the ability to require reasonable accommodation as long as it is not so onerous that it would make it economically unfeasible. He shares Boardmember Clair's concerns. There is an application before the Board and the design submitted contains several errors so the Board cannot make a determination. He suggests the applicant revise the plans to correct the errors and bring it back before the Board. Sometimes, there are minor revisions needed and the final approval is delegated to Staff. However, this sounds like there are a number of different things that are needed. It is not the Board's responsibility or Staff's responsibility to figure out how to make this work. A corrected plan should be brought back so the Board can make a determination based on what has been submitted. Boardmember Dudley suggested that the applicant provide some type of calculation or proof that the panels will not be visible from the street. Vice Chair Ledyard noted that could be provided with their revised plans. Also, the applicant may need to provide the revised plans to the homeowner. Chair Charnetsky and Boardmember Clair agreed.

Vice Chair Ledyard **moved** to table this item to the next meeting; Boardmember Clair **seconded**. In response to Ms. Lundeen's question as to whether this has to come back before the Board, Chair Charnetsky replied that the motion being voted on is to have it come back before the Board. The vote was taken and the motion was **approved unanimously**.

B. Design Plans for an Addition/Exterior Remodel Proposed for 14200 W. Village Parkway, #2035

Mr. Sanks stated that this application is for one of the patio homes within the Cachet subdivision. Two versions of the same home were provided in the agenda packet. One is the applicant's home and the other is a picture of the model from the Cachet website. The applicant would like to do a 100 square foot bump out. They want to bring a portion of the house that is shifted back from the front forward and add a bathroom. The difference will not be discernible. Staff believes it will look fine and recommends approval with the condition that the colors, materials, and finishes will match the addition. Ms. Maslowski noted that the applicant did say that Cache does offer the option to add this, but the applicant did not take the option at that time.

Roy Ramirez stated that he represents the remodeling company that will build the addition. The addition will follow the same architectural design with the same rooflines, colors, materials, and finishes. The home is already built and this will be added on. Cache does offer this addition as an option. He will submit this to the HOA. He thought that, once the City approves the plan, the HOA will most likely approve it. Chair Charnetsky noted that, usually the HOA approves the plans first, then it is brought to the City. Mr. Ramirez stated that he will get the HOA approval. There are homes already in the community that have this third bath. Chair Charnetsky commented that the pictures display these as single homes but, in reality, they are built very tightly together.

Robert Darre, a City resident, inquired if the HOA is operating with local board members or are the developers still in charge of the HOA. The developers are very picky when they lay each plan out. Ms. Maslowski noted that the City does not require HOA approval. It is up to the applicants to be sure they are following their HOA rules. It is suggested to applicants that they get their HOA approval, but the City does not require applicants to submit an HOA approval. This item could be approved and then it would be up to the applicant to get their HOA approval. Vice Chair Ledyard noted that the Board could approve this, but if it is built according to what the Board approved and the HOA does not, there could be a problem with the HOA. Also, changes requested by the HOA are made without coming back before the Board, there will be issues with the City. Ms. Maslowski noted that was correct. If the HOA requires changes, the applicant will have to come back before the Board.

Chair Charnetsky noted that, currently, there is a little window that faces the front, but she does not see any windows in the addition. Mr. Ramirez stated that there will be a window. The existing window will be pushed out. He will submit the plans to the HOA and, if they request changes, he will come back before the Board. Chair Charnetsky noted that the plans do not show the window. There is one of the side, but not on the front. Mr. Ramirez stated there will be one on the front.

Boardmember Dudley **moved** to approve the application with the condition that there be a window in the front as depicted in the model, and if the HOA requires any changes to what the Board has approved, the application is to come back before the Board; Vice Chair Ledyard **seconded**: **unanimous approval**.

C. Design Plans for an Addition/Exterior Remodel Proposed for 910 E. Campina Lane

Mr. Sanks stated that this application is for an addition and remodel. The applicant noted in their application that their intent is to modernize and add to the existing residence. Per the narrative provided by the applicant, the proposal intends to keep the pitched roof and parapet intact with the shingles. Stucco and paint colors will match the existing while new metal trellises will be added to the portions of walls that don't have windows. The narrative attempts to describe the changes in detail, but the proposed elevations depict the dramatic improvement over the existing residence. Mr. Sanks

described the changes being proposed. He stated that the remodel will bring the aging home to something more contemporary. Staff finds that the addition and remodel will bring added value to this property and the neighborhood. Approval is recommended subject to the exhibits provided and with the condition that colors, materials and finishes will match the existing residence except as modified by the exhibits provided.

Michael Thompson, the applicant, stated that the area between the main house and new garage is the existing garage. It is behind the trees on the street view. That will be converted to livable. The three palm trees will remain.

Chair Charnetsky commented that this will be a good remodel for this area.

Boardmember Dudley **moved** to approve the application as submitted; Boardmember Clair **seconded**; **unanimous approval.**

D. Design Plans for an Addition/Exterior Remodel Proposed for 465 E. Estero Lane

Mr. Sanks stated that the applicant is proposing to remodel this home and add approximately 600 square feet of livable area and a new 815 square foot garage. Per the narrative provided by the applicant, the proposal intends to keep the pitched roof parapet intact with the shingles. The residence has been kept in good condition. The proposed remodel will make the home more contemporary. The roofline will remain the same, but a lot of adornment will be added to the entry. Additional adornment will be added to the windows and a new garage with carriage doors will be added. Staff finds that this will be a great addition, updating a nice existing home to an even nicer home. The addition and remodel will add value to the property and neighborhood and approval is recommended with the condition that all colors, materials and finishes shall match the existing except as modified by the application.

Mike Fernandez, of 360 Construction and representing the applicant, stated there have been slight modifications to the plan that had been presented to the Board previously. The Board had a concern with the proposed RV garage and that has been removed.

Chair Charnetsky commented that the remodel looks good. Boardmember Dudley stated that she likes the plan and thinks it will look beautiful. Her only concern is that, with the desert landscape style, the white color might be cool. She suggested the applicant consider using a warmer white color. Mr. Fernandez stated that, with a remodel of this size, there will be some landscape upgrades following the construction of the house. They will add more greenery and get rid some of the desert landscape and rock.

Boardmember Clair **moved** to approve this a presented; Boardmember Dudley **seconded**; **unanimous approval.**

E. Signage Proposed for the Sun Health La Loma Campus Located at the Northwest Corner of Litchfield and Camelback Roads

Mr. Sanks stated that this item is being presented as a study session and he provided some background information about the property and its uses. He stated that Sun Health is now looking at what would be appropriate signage to bring notoriety and identity to the project. Paul Vanderveen, of Sun Health, met with City Staff, presented his proposed signs, and asked what would be the most reasonable path to receive approval of the signs. The issue is that the major sign being proposed is a 25' high billboard sign that will be located at the northwest corner of Camelback and Litchfield Roads. The sign is three times larger than what would be allowed by the City's Zoning Code. The Design Review Board has

some minor discretion with the Code requirements when a Comprehensive Sign Plan is submitted. However, this package is so unique and particular to this project that it should be considered as an amendment to the Planned Development. The purpose of a Planned Development is to provide development standards that cater to unique projects that do not strictly conform to the Code. Staff would like to show the Board what Sun Health is proposing and receive comments from the Board regarding the signage, such as looks, size, height, location, materials, the windmill, the older truck, etc. This will be the identity of the northwest corner of Litchfield and Camelback Roads.

Mr. Sanks displayed and provided details regarding the proposed signage and other items proposed for the property. He noted that he has seen signs like this in developments across the country that have a rural agricultural theme. The applicant will be requesting approval of the sign, as well as the trees, truck and windmill shown on the exhibit.

Mr. Vanderveen stated that Sun Health feels this will be a statement for the 322 acres, which includes the hilltop portion. They are not trying to say this is Sun Health or one of the pieces of many things that will happen on this property. They do want to harken back to the history of the property. The truck was part of the hilltop at one time. It is an old farm truck. It will be painted the Sun Health blue color, and it will say Sun Health on the door. The trellis work under the billboard is reminiscent of the trellis at the current Historical Society building (Aunt Mary's house). In the theme of the old orchard, the trees at the corner are mature orange trees. They have had a number of renditions prior to this one. He is wanting to hear how the Board feels about the proposal and understand any concerns the Board might have.

Mr. Sanks noted that one of the concerns he has is if the agritourism portion of this project never materializes and all that is developed are the residential units and medical buildings, this could be constructed and stand alone with dirt behind it.

Following are comments provided by the Board with follow up by Mr. Sanks and Mr. Vanderveen.

- It is enormous.
- The sign is very rural and composed of almost all words. It is not indicative of Litchfield Park.
- The residents have communicated through the years that they want Litchfield Park to be upscale, and this sign would not be considered upscale.
- The architecture for the new sections to be developed had a more modern design. This does not tie in with that. Mr. Vanderveen stated that the new community center design is very modern. Some of the casitas will also have a modern feel. However, those will be located further down Camelback with their own entrance.
- There is a lot of space to put in a nice low sign to allow visibility behind it.
- It makes one think they are going into a Florida orange grove rather than a beautiful community.
- Allowing such a large sign might set a precedence.
- Mr. Vanderveen stated that the corner is massive and the space is big. He might put some helium balloons up to provide the scale of the signs with the property and the trees.
- Is the scale depicted in the exhibit correct? Mr. Vanderveen stated the truck is smaller, but his architect said that the rest is roughly to scale. Mr. Sanks had suggested getting a photograph of the corner and Photoshop the scale on top of that and he might do that.
- It seems to be a different style from the design of the buildings that have been approved. It might be better to look at this once the Agritourism portion of the property is developed. Right now it is a very different theme from the rest of the development.
- Mr. Sanks noted that it is not set back very far from the intersection. It is only 50'. It will be an illuminated 25' high billboard sign that will be at the intersection. A photo rendering should be provided for the next review/discussion.

- The Board would like to see photos from different angles of how this would look with what is anticipated to be behind the sign and from the medical office building.
- The sign is too tall and there is concern with how this might look from the backyards of the homes across the intersection. Those properties have already had to deal with lights from other commercial centers. Adding a lit billboard is a big concern and will affect those homeowners. Lighting is important and is a very sensitive issue now.
- Mr. Sanks added that, if this goes through the Planned Development process, public hearings will be held and notices will be sent out.
- The windmill is strange. Windmills were not really utilized around here.

Mr. Vanderveen thanked the Boardmembers for their comments and stated he will take them into consideration.

F. Minutes

Vice Chair Ledyard **moved** to approve the minutes of the January 7, 2021 meeting; Boardmember Dudley **seconded; unanimous approval.**

III. Staff Report on Current Events

Mr. Sanks reported on the progress of the Dysart and Camelback Roads center.

IV. Boardmembers' Report on Current Events

There were no reports.

V. Adjournment

Boardmember Dudley **moved** to adjourn the meeting; Vice Chair Ledyard **seconded; unanimous approval.** The meeting was adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

**APPROVED:
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD**

Susan Charnetsky, Chair

/pjm