

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF
THE LITCHFIELD PARK DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
March 4, 2021**

I. Call to Order

The meeting was held online via Zoom and called to order by Chair Charnetsky at 7:20 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; Stephanie Irwin, Accounting Specialist; and Dawn Morocco, IT Assistant,

II. Business

A. Design Plans for a Second Story Addition/Exterior Remodel Proposed for 268 Laguna Drive West

Mr. Sanks stated that the Board of Adjustment had approved a variance for the addition of a second story to this home, and the applicant is now seeking approval for the design plans. The sand stucco finish will be continued on to the second story, and the carport will remain. A walk-out balcony has been added with a tiled roof element over the balcony. Other details are also proposed, such as stucco over foam trim for popouts and brackets painted to match the existing carport, to tie in elements from the existing home. Staff finds the addition is consistent with the Board of Adjustment action on the variance and that the design plans will add value to the existing residence and neighborhood in general. Approval is recommended with the condition that the colors, materials, and finishes shall match the existing or as modified by the exhibits provided by the applicant.

Ross Risano, the applicant, stated Mr. Sanks covered most of the information. He is not trying to change the look of the neighborhood. The balcony was added to make it a focal point and dress the house up. In response to questions, Mr. Risano replied that there will be a 4' high parapet on all sides, and it will screen the air conditioning unit. He also explained the direction of the roof drainage. He stated that the front door will come out an additional six feet, and they will be enclosing the existing sun room that has an existing roof.

In response to questions, David Ross, of Ross Design Group and representing the applicant, stated that the lot coverage has been calculated at 43%. There will be a new covered 240 square foot patio in the rear, but that was not included in his calculation. Ms. Maslowski noted that the maximum lot coverage allowed by the Zoning Code for this area is 60%. It was noted that the 240 square feet should not cause the maximum lot coverage to be exceeded, and Mr. Ross stated they will make sure to add the patio cover square footage and new lot coverage on the construction drawings.

Boardmember Dudley **moved** to approve the application with the condition that the all colors, materials, and finishes are to match the existing except as modified by the application; Vice Chair Ledyard **seconded**; **unanimous approval**.

B. Design Plans for an Addition/Exterior Remodel Proposed for 4792 N. Barranco Drive

Mr. Sanks stated that the applicant is seeking approval of the design plans for a small addition to his home to accommodate a small ADA accessible suite. Although the addition is relatively small, the partial front elevation provided by the applicant indicates it will change the roofline along the street.

The front elevation provided by the applicant is only a partial elevation as the right side of the home, and the entry and front facing garage door are not shown. They are going to bring the left side of the home forward and change the roofline to match the roofline over the garage. It is nice that they are bringing the livable portion forward. One concern he had was that the stone veneer existing on the front elevation is not currently on the portion of the residence where the addition is proposed to be brought forward, nor is it being proposed for when that area is brought forward toward the street. Now that the portion of the house is moving forward, and with the roofline change, it might look a little strange to not have something other than the windows to break up the broad wall. Other than that, Staff had no concerns with the request.

Chair Charnetsky noted she was concerned that the gable end will create a difficult valley for rain drainage. Doing more of a hip style roof might help, and it would not be out of character because there is that type of roof existing on a portion of the house.

Mike Fernandez, of 360 Construction and representing the applicant, stated the reason they did not plan to add the stone veneer on the addition is that they were trying to mimic the original design of the home as much as possible. The homeowner would not object to putting in a hip roof instead of the gable. Chair Charnetsky commented that changing the roof style and having more tile will help balance out all the stucco. Mr. Fernandez stated that they were planning on using the architectural sills rather than putting in the stone veneer. However, if there is an issue, they are willing to add the stone wainscoting. They would wrap it back about 10' on the side elevation. Boardmember O'Connor noted that he likes the idea of the hip roof, but thinks it will look better without the stone wainscot. Chair Charnetsky agreed.

Vice Chair Ledyard **moved** to approve the application as submitted with the addition of the hip roof versus the gable, and with the condition that the colors, materials and finishes are to match the existing; Boardmember Dudley **seconded; unanimous approval.**

C. Design Plans for an Addition/Exterior Remodel Proposed for 204 Campbell Avenue

Mr. Sanks stated that this is an application for approval of the design plans for a small addition to a home with a slump block exterior, low flat roof, and side-entry garage to accommodate an extension of the master bedroom and a master bath. The addition will be partially obscured from the street view by its location at the end of the existing garage. As opposed to doing the addition in slump block, the intention is to expand the use of the siding that currently exists on the house. He is not sure if that is a material choice or if it is being done because of the difficulty in matching the slump block. Staff did not have a concern with this due to the addition being tucked back in the corner, the location of the siding elsewhere on the home, and thinking that the siding will break up some of the prevalence of the slump block. Approval of the application is recommended as the addition of a larger master bathroom to the home will add value to the home and surrounding neighborhood.

Katee Parton stated that she is the builder representing the owner. In response to questions, she responded that they are using the siding because they are not sure if the slump block is available. They will try to use the partial block that is currently there into areas where they can. If they cannot find the block, they will use the siding. The color will match the blue color that already exists on the house.

Boardmember O'Connor **moved** to approve the application based on Staff's recommendation and with the condition that all colors, building materials, and finishes shall match those of the existing residence; Boardmember Clair **seconded; unanimous approval.**

D. Design Plans for a Roof Mounted Solar Panel Installation Proposed for 520 Cascada Drive

Mr. Sanks stated that this is a unique situation where the applicant has submitted design plans for the installation of solar panels on a home that has both pitched and flat roofs. The panels are proposed to be located on the pitched roof of the residence that faces the street, as well as the rear flat roof portion of the residence. The front facing array meets the Zoning Code's criteria for panels on a pitched roof as the panels will be arranged in a flat quadrangular shape. However, the array proposed for the rear of the home would be placed on the flat roof. The panels will be 2'2" tall and appear to be unscreened. Per the applicant, the production of this array is important as it comprises approximately 40% of the production capacity of the overall installation. Staff does not have an indication that this rear array will meet the zoning ordinance criteria for placement on the flat portion of a roof as required. Mr. Sanks read the Zoning Code requirements for solar panels located on flat roofs. He stated the home backs to the rear side yard of the home next door and appears to face their rear yard and pool. The array will be visible and the neighbor will be looking at the underside of the array. It is Staff's recommendation that the applicant explain if there is some type of screening mechanism they can provide to the underside of the new pitched array in a form that the Board finds acceptable.

Livia Lindsey, of Odin Energy and representing the applicant, stated that she believes they do not have any type of screening that could be used to block the neighbor's view of the panels. She has never seen screening on a flat roof. The panels will be tilted 15°. They looked at using a 0° pitch; but, unfortunately, the production drops quite a bit. To bring the production back up, the homeowner would have to purchase additional panels, making the project not cost effective. The best roof for solar is a south facing roof. Putting the panels on a north facing roof drops production significantly. In response to a question, Ms. Lindsey replied that if they put the panels flat on the flat roof, the pitched roof would shade those panels and drop production. They must tilt the panels 15° on a flat roof to get as much sun exposure as possible.

Further discussion included:

- In response to a suggestion to put end caps on the panels, Ms. Lindsey noted she has never seen this, but could investigate if it can be done.
- Adding screening might not work structurally and it really does not improve the look of the panels.
- It was originally planned to put more panels on the front roof, but the homeowner requested that as many panels as possible be put on the back roof so they would not be as visible. Also, the owner has plans to expand the garage and wants to leave room for that.
- The plan, as presented, does not meet the Code requirements.
- The homeowner would like to get this done as soon as possible.
- The applicant's rear yard is visible from several backyards and swimming pools.
- In response to an inquiry as to what percentage of production would be lost if panels were lowered either completely or to some degree, Brent Lewis, of Green Muscle Solar, answered that, if the panels were lowered from a 15° to 10° tilt the production loss should only be about 3%. If they were dropped to a 5° tilt, the production loss would be about 6%.
- If the tilt was dropped to 5°, the panel height should drop from 21"-22" to about 9".
- A portrait oriented tilted panel will be higher than a horizontally oriented tilted panel.
- There is the option to put them in landscape orientation if there are two rows. There should not be a shading problem.
- Some of the panels might have to be transferred to the front roof.

Ms. Lindsey stated that it appears that she would be able to reduce the number of back panels to 10 in a landscape position. She is willing to transfer the panels to the front, but she will have to inform the homeowner. Putting 10 panels in the back and transferring more panels to the front, the production would stay the same. Dropping the tilt to 10° would drop the production about 3%, which would be

within the variance they can have. However, the homeowner might have an issue when he expands his garage. Chair Charnetsky noted that the current plan shows panels over the garage. Ms. Lindsey stated that she will check with the engineer to be sure that what she has proposed will work.

Mr. Sanks asked for clarification from the Boardmembers that what is being requested is that the height of the panels on the flat roof is to be reduced to 10” with the panels re-oriented to a landscape position, and that about six of the panels from the back are to be brought to the front pitched roof to lay flat and form a quadrangular array with the other panels proposed for the front roof. Chair Charnetsky noted that was correct and added that they can also do a double row in the back if possible which might allow them to not have to transfer any panels to the front.

Vice Chair Ledyard **moved** to table this to the next meeting with the proviso that, if in the interim, the applicant is able to work with Staff to put together a plan covering all the items discussed tonight and as noted by Mr. Sanks, Staff has the authority to approve the application. If the applicant is unable to reach an agreement with Staff, then the application is to be brought back to the next meeting. Boardmember O’Connor **seconded** the motion and there was **unanimous approval**.

E. Design Plans for a Roof Mounted Solar Panel Installation Proposed for 241 Laguna Drive East

Mr. Sanks stated that this is an application for the location of tilted solar panels on a flat roof. He read the Zoning Code requirements for locating panels on a flat roof. He noted that, based on the exhibits provided by the applicant, it appears that the tilted arrays will not be screened from view by a parapet wall that exceeds the height of the panel array. He had thought that the parapet wall would be only 1” tall; however, the applicant has indicated it might be taller. The neighboring home has unscreened tilted panels on the roof that appear similar to this application, although they seem to have a different structural support system. He would like the solar company representative to discuss the overall height of the array and how much screening there will be from the existing parapet so it can be determined how much of the panels will be visible from the street.

Brent Lewis, of Green Muscle Solar and representing the applicant, stated he does not have the exact dimensions of the parapet wall. The panels will be about 12” at the highest point. They went out to the property and laid out where the panels would be located. He then went down to the sidewalk and across the street and, based on a 10° tilt and with the ballast they will be using, the panels will not be seen. The panels on the house next door are about 24” tall and there is no parapet. Those panels are about 10” to 12” taller than the height of the panels they will be using.

In response to questions, Mr. Lewis stated he was only informed of having to attend the meeting a short time ago and did not have time to prepare photos for the Board. He is the owner of the company and will vouch that the panels will not be seen. However, he can provide photos and measurements if that is wanted. They did lay everything out and meticulously measured the height of the panels at 12” to be certain the panels will not be visible. He is not certain if there is a parapet wall in the back. The lots have small back yards so it is unlikely they will be visible. Chair Charnetsky commented that she can tell there is a parapet by the shadows on the street view, but she does not know how high it is. Mr. Lewis noted it appears to be the same as the front. Chair Charnetsky noted that, looking at the scuppers, it appears that parapet is about 12” tall. Boardmember Dudley pointed out that it appears there is a raised section of the roof in the back. Mr. Lewis noted that is correct. However, those panels will not be seen, at least from the front. He is not certain about the back yard.

In response to a question regarding the panels on the house next door, Ms. Maslowski provided some background information regarding the approval, noting the panels were installed some time ago and the approval process was not followed properly.

Mr. Lewis stated that the back panels face south so what will be seen is the side of the panels. There will be no hanging wires. They will paint the conduit to match the white of the flat roof.

Boardmember Dudley **moved** to approve the application based on the exhibits provided; Boardmember Clair **seconded; unanimous approval.**

F. Proposed Policy Regarding Criteria for Design Review Board Approval of Solar Panel Installations on Flat Roofs

It was noted that this item was suggested by Boardmember Dudley.

Mr. Sanks stated that this item is on the agenda for discussion. There are Zoning Code requirements for panels on flat roofs, but the Board has the ability to use some discretion. Boardmember Dudley is suggesting establishing additional criteria or changing criteria for solar panels on flat roofs.

Boardmember Dudley noted that, in previous cases with pitched up panels on flat roofs, the Board has asked if the panels will be visible from the street and there had been no clear way for the applicant to provide that information. Her goal with the proposed policy is to provide a way for the applicant to show if the panels will be visible and, if so, how much. Chair Charnetsky noted it would be good to have the applicant provide the additional information. Mr. Sanks noted this could be an addition to the application if that is what the Board would like. Chair Charnetsky commented that, if the applicant can prove that the panels will not be visible, then Staff could approve the application without having to bring it before the Board. Boardmember Clair noted that it seems it would make sense to include the questions in the application. Staff could then approve the application without bringing it before the Board.

Chair Charnetsky **moved** to allow Staff to administratively approve solar panel applications for panels on flat roofs when the applicants have provided measurements and photographs proving the installation will not be visible from the street. If it is unclear whether the panels will be visible, Staff can refer the application to the Board; Boardmember Clair **seconded; unanimous approval.**

III. Staff Report on Current Events

Mr. Sanks reported that there has been no forward movement on the Sun Health La Loma signage proposal that was discussed at the previous meeting. He also 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; Boardmember O'Connor **seconded; unanimous approval.** The meeting was adjourned at 8:54 p.m.

**APPROVED:
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD**

Susan Charnetsky, Chair