

**CITY OF REDMOND  
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD  
December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2011**

NOTE: These minutes are not a full transcription of the meeting. Tapes are available for public review in the Redmond Planning Department.

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** David Scott Meade, Joe Palmquist, Craig Krueger, Lara Sirois, Mike Nichols

**EXCUSED ABSENCE:** Scott Waggoner, Jannine McDonald

**STAFF PRESENT:** Steve Fischer, Principle Planner; Gary Lee, Senior Planner

**RECORDING SECRETARY:** Susan Trapp of Lady of Letters, Inc.

The Design Review Board is appointed by the City Council to make decisions on design issues regarding site planning, building elevations, landscaping, lighting and signage. Decisions are based on the design criteria set forth in the Redmond Development Guide.

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Design Review Board meeting was called to order by David Scott Meade at 7:05 p.m.

**MEETING MINUTES**

**IT WAS MOVED BY MR. PALMQUIST AND SECONDED BY MR. KRUEGER TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 17<sup>TH</sup>, 2011 MEETING. MOTION PASSES (3-0) WITH TWO ABSTENTIONS.**

**PRE-APPLICATION**

**PRE110008, Penny Lane Townhomes**

**Description:** Four new townhomes, 3-story, wood framed with sprinklers, approximately 8,450 gross square feet, Built Green 5-star

**Location:** 7950 170<sup>th</sup> Ave NE

**Architect:** Daniel Umbach

**Applicant:** Tim Walsh

**Staff Contact:** Gary Lee, 425-556-2418 or [glee@redmond.gov](mailto:glee@redmond.gov)

Mr. Lee informed the DRB that this is the first pre-application meeting for this project. He says this is a unique project in that it is a pre-fabricated building that is built off-site, shipped over, then assembled. It is a townhouse project. One concern from staff is about the actual shape of the building, which appears flat and boxy. He would also like to know how the building would be clad and roofed. The building would be very energy efficient, which is exciting for staff, but Mr. Lee wants to make sure it is good looking as well. There are several design modifications requested by the applicant. Two are not required, and one is close to being met but will need further calculations for open space requirements.

Architect Daniel Umbach presented on behalf of the applicant. Ichijo USA is the owner and builder. Ichijo is a home-building company in Japan that has built more than 100,000 homes in that country with a good reputation for quality and energy efficiency. Ichijo is just beginning work in the USA; the zHome Project in Issaquah is one of their first. It is a ten-unit, zero-energy townhome project. The homes are custom-designed, fabricated, panelized, then built on site. The project presented to the DRB will be similar, but slightly different in terms of the production method. The context of this project involves four-story projects on two sides of the site with the five-story Redmond Square building across the street. North of the site, there are single-family homes. This project will be relatively small in the context to the neighborhood; there is a single-family home on the site right now.

Regarding the site, it would be four units in a four-square pattern. Two units on the north side will have vehicular access from the east and west. The units on the south side have access from Penny Lane.

Pedestrian access is also from the east and west with combined entry walks. There is private open space on each side for every unit. No joint open space has been proposed. Decks and balconies overlook the front yards and landscaping. One energy component of the project will be solar panels. Those panels provide one of the reasons for the simple design, to maximize the roof space for the solar collectors. Ichijo is hoping to relate to a larger buying pool, realizing that the competition for this project will come from single-family projects. Therefore, the units are a bit larger than usual townhomes, at 2,100 square feet. Each unit has a double-car garage. Ichijo wants the units to work for older couples, too, who might want to age in place. Residential elevators will likely be provided in the future. The living spaces are on the street, looking out. Each unit has two bedrooms, and there may be room for additional bedrooms, as well. On the north side, the project backs up on the north property line. There is less going on with this side with the expectation that larger buildings will eventually exist on that side.

The applicant says the plan would involve mostly cement panel siding to make it fairly contemporary. Not a lot of woodwork or trim would be used, which he admitted would be a contrast to some of the other buildings in the area. A cultured brick or stone would be used as well. The building across the street to the south uses red brick on the base, and there is some stone in other buildings nearby. Redmond Square, also across the street, will mainly use brick. The applicant showed the panel siding of the zHome in Issaquah, which involves metal joints between the siding pieces that are not all that conspicuous. A final decision on the siding material and installation has not been reached by the applicant.

#### **COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD MEMBERS:**

##### Mr. Krueger:

- Asked about the components, and if they arrive shipped as walls. He asked if the Redmond project would have exposed floor joists and other elements similar to the zHome. The applicant said the wall panels would be assembled in Japan, which would include everything from studs to exterior finish material.
- The applicant noted, however, on this project, some of the finished materials would not be pre-fabricated, in that those materials are still winding their way through the design approval process. Therefore, these units will be built without the exterior finished panels on them.
- The applicant said the interiors have not been worked out yet, but he was doubtful that elements of the framing would be exposed, simply due to the construction process.
- Mr. Krueger says he likes the concept of the site and how it fits into the corner. The applicant said he looked into going four stories, but the applicant went with the current design as a price point decision.
- Mr. Krueger asked about the rooftop solar panels and what purpose those panels would have. The applicant says the panels would provide power, not hot water.
- Mr. Krueger asked about the flat nature of the roof and walls. The applicant says that given the project's scale, it has a reasonable amount of modulation. The north side is flat, but as he mentioned earlier, the project is backed up to that side due to solar modulation and he is expecting more construction on that side of the project anyway.
- The applicant noted that something could be done to modulate that north side, however. He said that the Redmond Code asks for four feet in modulation. The bumps on the project are closer to three feet deep, more a practical matter based on the module Ichijo creates. The applicant is asking for some flexibility in that regard.
- Mr. Krueger likes the zHome and likes the corner deck space on the southwest corner of this project in Redmond, in particular.

##### Mr. Palmquist:

- Likes the design overall. Mr. Palmquist says he believes there is enough modulation, but he says the roof element could be a lot stronger. He suggested bringing out the roof a bit further.
- The applicant agreed that would look better, but did not know how that would work with the technical concerns of the Ichijo products.
- Mr. Meade suggested making things look bigger with a color change or shadow line. Mr. Palmquist agreed that could work, or even just a thicker fascia. He noted that other buildings presented by the applicant should have stronger roof elements.
- Mr. Palmquist said he would be okay with the colors presented and the modulation as well.

Ms. Sirois:

- Said the modulation is good. Regarding the north side, she said the void element helps with the design. She said having a railing on the deck space might provide some visual interest as well.
- Ms. Sirois suggested also playing with some sort of pattern in the panels. She did not want to overdo that idea, but brought up the idea of using an accent color or some sort of pattern in the panels.
- She is not crazy about the brick, which seems out of place from the contemporary look of the building. She suggested not considering too much of the brick context of the surrounding buildings and looking for other elements to echo. She suggested a wood element rather than brick.

Mr. Nichols:

- Likes the shape and building faces, which creates an interesting structure. The design, he says, fits the site very well.
- Mr. Nichols is most concerned about the smooth panels. He agreed with Ms. Sirois that wood would look nicer than brick. He would like some texture on the panels; too much smooth surface would not look right to him. He likes the accents of the wood on the zHome project.
- Mr. Nichols asked if the solar panels would cover the entire roof. The applicant said there would be an asphalt shingle roof that would allow for walking space, but most of the roof would indeed be covered with solar panels.
- Mr. Nichols likes the sustainability and the pre-fabrication concept. He noted that other buildings nearby, looking down on the building, could see some terrible glare. He is looking forward to seeing the evolution of the project.

Mr. Meade:

- Is not concerned about the north elevation, which he agreed would be much less important over time. He agreed with Ms. Sirois' idea to use some sort of wood product rather than brick.
- Mr. Meade said the proportions are working fine on the tower section, but not the lower section that has a node off the garage. He suggested breaking that down, possibly with wood.
- Mr. Meade suggested again the idea of creating some overhang for the roof.
- Mr. Meade is most concerned about the south elevation, which will be very prominent. He says right now, it does not have enough character. He suggested bringing in wood or bringing in some other siding material, such as lap. He would like some more relief in what he calls the large bay area.
- Mr. Meade noted that this project is a complex puzzle, but he wants the applicant to wow the DRB a bit more with the south elevation. The side elevations are working well, but the front needs help.
- Mr. Meade asked about the fence shown the project. The applicant said there would be fencing, but the material has not been decided. He asked for the DRB's position regarding privacy vs. transparency.
- Mr. Meade said boxing in the site with a fence might give neighbors privacy, but would involve giving up security. He encouraged keeping that fence under four feet; a transparent fence might be just under five feet. He would like to see the project in the future with and without the fence.
- Mr. Meade asked the applicant to play a little more with color to provide some identity for the individual units, perhaps adding a new color or changing the three colors provided more often.
- Mr. Meade asked about the fin, the vertical element shown on the project. The applicant said that element is just delineating the units, a physical break between them.
- Mr. Meade said the landscaping will be interesting going forward. The yards are small, but if they are done well, there should be plenty of space to create something extraordinary.

Mr. Krueger:

- Asked Mr. Lee what the code would be for the fences in the front yard. Mr. Lee responded that the code would allow for six-foot fences, but staff would not recommend that due to the security concerns that Mr. Meade brought up. Mr. Lee suggested three or four-foot fences.
- Mr. Krueger would not like the six-foot fences, which have created ugly streetscapes on some projects in Seattle. The applicant noted that fences could be built more creatively.
- Mr. Meade asked what the buyer profile would be. The applicant noted that based on the demand for the zHome, the profile would appear to be people who want to age in place. Thinking of that, Mr. Meade suggested a hedge, possibly a double hedge, rather than a fence.

- Mr. Lee said there might be at least one more pre-application for this project. Mr. Meade agreed. He said the applicant should consider creating a base expression with a horizontal panel detail and a tripartite feel, or layering.
- The applicant said that the design he created has some expression, but it is more subtle.
- Mr. Krueger said the project overall is exciting. He asked if there was a schedule on the construction, and the applicant said that would be as fast as possible.
- Mr. Meade summarized the views of the DRB as generally supportive of the project. He noted that this was a welcome change from most of the townhome projects the DRB has seen in the past, and a good choice in a changing neighborhood. The DRB thanked the applicant for his time.

#### **CONTINUED DISCUSSION ITEM: DESIGN AWARDS PROGRAM**

Mr. Fischer has provided a revised list to the DRB of projects that might be considered for design awards. The projects are in two groups: the 2004-2007 timeframe and 2007-2011. He has noted some staff recommendations in those two groups, but he would like the DRB to make its own recommendations. He would like the DRB to look at the 2004-2007 projects to determine what the award discussion should be in the future and what more information would be needed. Mr. Fischer has created a video about the series of award-winning projects, which will be shown at the next DRB meeting. Staff would like to see the awards ceremony to happen in May of 2012.

Mr. Krueger wanted to see photos of the buildings suggested that would address criteria such as unique building forms. He wanted to get a sense of the buildings. Mr. Fischer agreed that he could take those photos, but asked if the DRB could narrow down its choices such that there would not be as many photos to take. Mr. Meade asked about the Element Redmond project, formerly known as the Billy Townhomes. He is getting lost in the numbers connected to the Microsoft projects. Mr. Fischer noted he would take pictures of the numbered Microsoft projects. The Emerald Heights facility, a home for the elderly, could use some photos and more consideration, according to Mr. Meade. He said Redmond High School would be a slam dunk and the Marriott was very nice. Mr. Meade asked staff to consider the Starbucks on Redmond Way near Canyons in Redmond Center. Mr. Palmquist noted that the Redmond Presbyterian Church, on the list, was a good selection for tree retention.

Ms. Sirois asked about the Farrel McWhirter Park storage; Mr. Fischer said there were better City projects on this list rather than that one. Mr. Fischer brought up the Willows Warehouse, which did not gain much recognition among the DRB when he brought it up. He also spoke of the City of Redmond MOC storage building, which is tucked off the street. Both projects were not memorable, in Mr. Fischer's opinion. The DRB crossed them off the list. Mr. Meade said PCC would be a good choice; Mr. Fischer added that it was a LEED Gold facility. The surrounding retail outlets are not LEED Gold. Therefore, the DRB will concentrate on the grocery store, only. Horseman Elementary would be a good project to award, in Mr. Meade's opinion. Redmond Court deserves further consideration, and Mr. Fischer will take a few photos of it. St. Jude's might be a good project, and Mr. Fischer will take some photos of it as well. Mr. Meade said Whole Foods would be a good project. Mr. Palmquist asked about the City of Redmond wells, of which several are noted on the list provided by Mr. Fischer. He will provide pictures of those sites, and attempt to find online photos where possible.

The DRB next moved toward the 2007-2011 projects. Staff is recommending dropping the first two projects on the list, which Mr. Meade agreed with. Mr. Meade said the Bella Bottega Medical building turned out well, as well as Billy Townhomes. He recommended dropping the police department evidence room. City Wells 1 and 2, by Anderson Park, are on this list, as well as the City Treatment Building to the north. Mr. Meade said he likes all the Grass Lawn projects, even the maintenance building. He supports those buildings, but he says the Anderson Park projects are not extraordinary. He was concerned about giving too many awards to park projects. Mr. Fischer said he could shoot some photos of the Anderson Park treatment building. The DRB did not think the wells would be a good choice for awards. The Kohl's project was rejected, due to some poor choices with color. Mr. Fischer asked about a remodeled building that was turned into a mosque about two years ago. The DRB asked to see some photos of that project for further consideration. Mr. Fischer said he would get more photos of the Microsoft projects, as well. Mr. Palmquist asked him to edit as he shot photos, in that some projects might not need to be included. Mr. Meade suggested that many of the Microsoft projects could be lumped together with regard to design

awards. Mr. Palmquist suggested getting rid of the building behind Target, which the Board agreed with. Regarding Nintendo, Mr. Meade said he would like a tour of the buildings, which includes elements of Nintendo buttons and the Donkey Kong game. He said Redmond High School would be a slam dunk. Mr. Palmquist suggested removing the Patterson Park project, which he worked on professionally.

The DRB continued through the list, asking Mr. Fischer questions about projects they were trying to remember based on the short descriptions given. The Redmond Center remodel could be a good selection, in Mr. Meade's opinion, based on the Trader Joe's building. The Redmond TOD buildings should be considered, in Mr. Krueger's opinion, which would include the parking garage. The DRB agreed that the River Park office buildings, across from Veloce, were a good combined project. Mr. Meade considered this one of the most improved projects on the list. Mr. Fischer noted that there was another Trader Joe's project on 160<sup>th</sup>, which could include the entire storefront. The DRB agreed to include the whole storefront in consideration. Mr. Fischer recommended removing the Unisys project, which drew no opposition from the Board. White Swan, in Overlake, is an older project. Mr. Palmquist said that project turned out well. Target was taken off the list. The Silver Cloud was dropped from the list as well. The Reservoir Park Pump Station was a tiered site, and the Board asked for a picture of it for future consideration. Sequoia Estates was next on the list. The DRB was not overly supportive.

The commercial building on Bel-Red Way and 156<sup>th</sup> should be included, according to Mr. Meade, on the northeast corner. It is an older building and it is a Bellevue project, according to Mr. Fischer. Mr. Meade asked about the Matador remodel of Big Time Pizza. He asked to have that included on the list in the future. Mr. Fischer thanked the DRB for helping him narrow down the awards list. He asked the Board members to keep in touch with ideas for other projects, and promised to take photos of the projects mentioned above. The DRB will look at this list in 2012 to make final decisions, and Mr. Fischer will provide the video he has used before to give the Board an idea of the types of projects approved in the past for awards. He will take the Board's comments and convert them into the narrative for the video itself.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION MADE BY MR. PALMQUIST AND SECONDED BY MR. KRUEGER TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:37 P.M. MOTION PASSES (5-0).**

**February 16, 2012**  
**MINUTES APPROVED ON**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**RECORDING SECRETARY**