

**MINUTES REGULAR MEETING  
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD  
SEPTEMBER 18, 2007**

**ROLL**

**UNAPPROVED**

Board Members Present: Chair Kent, Dickens (*arrived after conclusion of Item 3*), Huntsberry, Alternate Summers

Planning Commission Liaison: Mills (absent)

Board Members Absent: Crew, Olmsted

Community Development: Kraig Tambornini, Senior Planner  
Sarjit Dhaliwal, Associate Planner  
Caron Parker, Associate Planner  
Katie Korzun, Economic Development Coordinator

**AGENDA**

**A. Staff Communications**

- 1) Past City Council, Planning Commission and Design Review Board Action on Design Review Matters

**B. Board Communications**

**C. Minutes**

- 2) August 7, 2007

**D. New Business**

- 3) ED07-039 Request for an Environmental and Design Review Permit, Use Permit and Minor Subdivision for a new, two-story, mixed-use building consisting of 3,425 square feet of office area on ground floor and three condominiums studio units on the upper floor with off-site parking.  
**522 3<sup>rd</sup> St. (Sarjit Dhaliwal)**
- 4) ED07-020 Request for an Environmental and Design Review Permit and Use Permit to construct a new Metro PCS wireless communication facility at the San Rafael Airport.  
**400 Smith Ranch Rd. (Caron Parker)**
- 5) ED07-068 Request for an Environmental and Design Review Permit, Use Permit, Sign Program and Lot Line Adjustment/Consolidation for the construction and operation of a new 56,400 sq. ft. auto dealership.

**700 Francisco Blvd. West (VW/Audi car dealership (Katie Korzun)**

6) ED07-069

Request for an Amendment to an Environmental and Design Review Permit, Use Permit, Sign Program and Lot Line

Adjustment/Consolidation to remodel the existing VW/Audi auto dealership to a Nissan dealership, adjust the frontage to reflect roadway changes, increase the lot size and revise the sign program.

**704 Francisco Blvd. West (Nissan car dealership) (Katie Korzun)****A. Staff Communications**

(1) Past City Council, Planning Commission and Design Review Board Action on Design Review Matters

Tambornini responded to questions regarding the Gas N Shop colors and the building has been abandoned, so staff will investigate and update the Board as to what is occurring at that location. Also, the 33 San Pablo project is being forwarded to the Commission at the request of the applicant in order to resolve the density issue. The applicant stated they could not make the modifications requested by the Board without reducing the density. In regard to the proposed Target development, a scoping meeting has been initiated for an EIR. Lastly, staff anticipates full agendas in October. The Mt. Tam Cemetery and the Toyota lighting concept will be coming to the Board.

**B. Board Communications****C. Minutes**

(2) August 7<sup>th</sup>, 2007

Huntsberry moved and Alternate Summers seconded, to approve the August 7<sup>th</sup> minutes as presented. Motion carried.

AYES:	Members:	Huntsberry, Alternate Summers, Chair Kent
NOES:	Members:	None
ABSTAIN:	Members:	None
ABSENT:	Members:	Crew, Dickens, Olmsted

**D. New Business**

(3) ED07-039

Request for an Environmental and Design Review Permit, Use Permit and Minor Subdivision for a new, two-story, mixed-use building consisting of 3,425 square feet of office area on ground floor and three condominiums studio units on the upper floor with off-site parking.

**522 3<sup>rd</sup> St. (Sarjit Dhaliwal)**

Dhaliwal summarized the staff report and recommended that the project design is generally consistent with the City's development standards and design-related policies.

The project would need to apply for review and approval of the mural and a sign program.

Jerry Johannessen, architect, explained that the colors are three shades of gray and terra cotta. The sign, as shown on Sheet 2.1, is fully described and the sign proposed on the front would be of the same type, which they hoped to receive approval. They provided a mockup of how the mural would appear. The materials would be either edged copper or porcelain on metal and they desired guidance from the Board in that regard.

Alternate Summers asked the precise location of the mural. Architect Johannessen approached the architectural drawings and pointed out the area for the Board, which is on the wall about half way back in the parking lot.

Chair Kent opened the public hearing on this item.

Jacky Schmidt, Montecito Area Residents Association, noted support for this project. They liked how the building is stepped back as well as the residential component. It is a vast improvement over different projects that have been proposed in the past.

There being no further public testimony on this item, the Chair closed the public hearing and brought the matter back to the Board for discussion and action.

Alternate Summers appreciated how the project is massed and how it steps back. He felt it is extremely appropriate for the site. He had no objection to the colors or mural. He believed it is a very successful design. He also appreciated the housing component.

Huntsberry concurred with Alternate Summers comments.

Chair Kent agreed with the Board as well, but believed there is an opportunity to provide some bike lockers to avoid bikes being stored on balconies. Also, the cobblestone area in the front should be planted, so he desired some softening between the building and street.

Tambornini noted that staff is recommending that the signs come back because they are not flushed out for all the tenants. Staff desired uniformity. Chair Kent felt the one sign provided is appropriate and if that is the concept for the rest of the sign program he had no objection.

Chair Kent asked for a motion.

Huntsberry moved and Alternate Summers seconded, to approve the project as submitted including the mural subject to the conditions outlined by staff and the Commission, including the bicycle parking; replacing the cobblestone with plantings in front; and individual tenants adhering to the Sign Program. Motion carried unanimously.

AYES:	Members:	Huntsberry, Alternate Summers, Chair Kent
NOES:	Members:	None

ABSTAIN: Members None  
 ABSENT: Members: Crew, Dickens, Olmsted

*Board Member Dickens joined the DRB meeting.*

- (4) ED07-020 Request for an Environmental and Design Review Permit and Use Permit to construct a new Metro PCS wireless communication facility at the San Rafael Airport.  
**400 Smith Ranch Rd. (Caron Parker)**

Parker summarized the staff report and staff supported the proposed project because it is in keeping with the General Plan 2020 policies, meets all zoning codes requirements, meets the performance standards established for wireless communication facilities and will blend in with the existing land uses on the project site. Following the recommendation of the Board, the application will be forwarded to the Planning Commission for their consideration. Staff then requested the Board's guidance regarding:

- Evaluating alternate designs to reduce visual impact
- Necessity for additional landscaping around the project site
- Exploring the feasibility of co-location, given the impact of additional height and off-site visibility.

Chair Kent noted that the FAA study concluded that the maximum height is 45 feet and asked staff if that would make co-location impossible. Parker responded that the applicant could request additional review from the FAA in order to investigate whether a 50-foot pole would be appropriate.

Maryann Miller-Novak, applicant, explained that the original proposal was for a 38-foot single pole with three antennas on top, but they provided design options in order to receive feedback. In Exhibit E, they outlined four different options. The first is co-location that would increase the height of the pole to 50 feet. In regard to FAA study, they must have another study conducted to receive clearance on a 50-foot pole. The second option would be to have Metro PCS install a tree pole. The third would be to have a co-located tree pole and the fourth would be a vent pipe option. The tallest is the co-located tree pole due to the tapering that must be done to make the pole appear as a real tree.

Dickens asked the lowest of the four schemes. Ms. Miller-Novak responded that the original proposal for 38 feet is the lowest, but the vent pipe could also be at 38 feet, so those are the two lowest options. She explained that option A must be 50 feet because a minimum horizontal separation is required to avoid radio frequency interference between the two carriers.

Huntsberry clarified that Option C, which is a single carrier tree pole, would include keeping the existing antennas on the Cingular pole. Ms. Miller-Novak agreed. She also explained that the antennae are concealed by a fiberglass material in regard to the vent pipe.

Alternate Summers asked if the vent pipe could handle both carriers. Ms. Miller-Novak responded that the vent pipe would be only for be Metro PCS and Cingular would remain on their pole. In regard to Option C, the existing Cingular pole is shown as the brown wooden pole to the left of the tree, so that would remain.

Chair Kent opened the public hearing on this item, and seeing no one wishing to speak, the Chair closed the public hearing and brought the matter back to the Board for discussion and action.

Dickens contacted a neighbor that lives in the industrial area who had no problems with the existing or this proposed pole. He felt the tree is dreadful.

Huntsberry believed the tree approach seemed out of character, so he preferred the vent pipe as the best solution for this industrial setting. Chair Kent and Alternate Summers concurred and noted support for Option B.

Chair Kent asked for a motion.

Huntsberry moved and Dickens seconded, to approve Option B (stealth vent pipe) as submitted. Motion carried unanimously.

AYES:	Members:	Huntsberry, Dickens, Chair Kent, Alternate Summers
NOES:	Members:	None
ABSTAIN:	Members:	None
ABSENT:	Members:	Crew, Olmsted

(5) ED07-068 Request for an Environmental and Design Review Permit, Use Permit, Sign Program and Lot Line Adjustment/Consolidation for the construction and operation of a new 56,400 sq. ft. auto dealership.

**700 Francisco Blvd. West (VW/Audi car dealership) (Katie Korzun)**

Korzun summarized the staff report and requested that the Board review the proposed project and make recommendations to the Planning Commission as to whether it is consistent with the site and its surrounding environment as well as the Design Guidelines and Review Criteria of the Zoning Ordinance. Staff then recommended conditions of approval as outlined in the staff report.

Huntsberry asked staff if they considered adding finger planters along the sides of the large building. Korzun did explore the idea with the applicant who had strong feelings in that regard, so the Board should discuss this with the applicant. Also, the open area behind the building between the sanitary easement and driveways was discussed with the applicant who felt that it was not workable, but the Board can explore it further with the applicant.

Kit Wong, architect, corrected the submitted rendering and explained that the logo on the VW building is actually on the exterior glass. He provided a computer model for the

Board's consideration. In regard to the drainage swale between Toys R Us and this dealership, they show a bio swale in addition to the proposed hydrocarbon filtration system. The filtration unit proposed has the ability to collect all hydrocarbons on the ground due to accidental drip and is designed to take the first flush and filter. The bio swale shown is in addition to the filter unit. However, in discussion with the County, they provided no guidance in regard to designing the bio swale and the applicant is willing to comply with all requirements. He pointed out that the roof top mechanical area is located in the back of the curved roof on the Audi wing and on the VW wing they extended the parapet where the parts area is located to wrap around the mechanical unit. At the last meeting, the Board requested that they explore reversing the slope of the hanger. They explored that option, but Audi wanted views into the hanger as one drives towards the service bays. Since they reduced the mass of the VW building, they have addressed the Board's concern in another way. In regard to finger plantings at the sides of the building, they have a particular problem on this site with ground containments in the soil. They went through a costly process working with the Department of Toxic Substance Control (DTSC) who allowed construction on this site with the caveat that all the hazardous material be capped from infiltration of water from above. The applicant believes, based on the DTSC report, that the material is located in the center, so it is safe to plant around the edges. If they are allowed to add more plantings by DTSC they would do so.

Dickens asked if the VW building proposed to be a rigid frame. Architect Wong responded in the affirmative. The elevations and renderings show just the window frames to give the lightness of the appearance, but acknowledged that the actual frame will be much larger. Dickens asked for an explanation in regard to the bio swale. Civil Engineer Schwartz explained that the bio swale is a relatively new concept. No one is real firm on the concept, but in general, it is some type of a planted swale. They will work with the landscape architect in regard to appropriate plantings in order to allow storm water to flow through before flowing through the actual storm drain system. That natural filtered median will remove a certain amount of pollutants. Whether implementation of that concept is truly workable they are not sure, but designed into the project is a fail safe filtration system that the water that runs through the swale will discharge into before the storm drain system and out to Highway 101. He indicated that the bio swale would slow the water down by passing through a vegetated area and a pipe would run parallel to the swale under the topsoil and the water would filter through. He cannot indicate for certain what happens to pollutants that are retained. Chair Kent pointed out that Smart Car also has a bio swale and there is an East Bay agency that developed the industry standards as well as suggested plant palettes. The applicant must come back with details, and suggested that Smart Car proposal be looked at. Korzun indicated that the East Bay agency is Alameda County as well as Contra Costa.

Huntsberry believed a bio swale is similar to Mother Nature's small version of wetlands. Civil Engineer Schwartz stated that at this point they are showing that they have space for a bio swale, but in terms of functionality it is not known.

Chair Kent asked the applicant to discuss the internal lighting. Architect Wong

responded that they hope to have the building as beautiful at night as it is during the daytime. The intent of the glass showroom is visibility. Both brands worked very hard with their industrial designers to dictate the interior design of these facilities where the lights shine down, so it will be presented as an illuminated glass box. They intend to have a few exterior lights so the buildings are visible, but not dramatic. Huntsberry clarified that the lighting will appear more like RAB than the Toyota dealership. Architect Wong responded in the affirmative.

Chair Kent discussed roof drainage and asked if that will be filtered and then released to the street. Architect Wong responded in the affirmative.

Chair Kent opened the public hearing on this item, and seeing no one wishing to speak, the Chair closed the public hearing and brought the matter back to the Board for discussion and action.

Huntsberry thanked the architect and owners for sizing down the massing and stepping the buildings back. He liked the project and believed the project looks good. He suggested additional trees to be planted along the building in order to shade the building as best as possible. He suggested raised planters to deal with the hazardous soil. He desired the finger islands around the building with trees as large possible as well as shrubs and looked forward to seeing that come back along with a lighting program. He had no objection to the sign program, which has greatly improved and is appropriate for the facility. He objected to the portal being illuminated. As far as the glass enclosures, if the lighting level is similar to RAB, then he had no objection and with those changes he could support the project.

Alternate Summers desired more landscaping along the sides of the building. The site lighting must be directed downwards and agreed that RAB's light level is appropriate for this building. He commended the applicant on a great presentation. He believed the three buildings have a nice dialogue with each other in their massing and stepping. Cumulatively the whole project is quite successful and looked forward to seeing the project completed.

Dickens supported the idea of intensifying the landscaping on the west side, but did not see the finger planters being logical due to all the traffic. He preferred to see an intensification of some larger species along that larger strip. It is a handsome building and project. He desired to review the lighting in more detail. He cautioned the architect in regard to roof vents and any mechanical equipment because the buildings are quite simply and elegant. He then wished their civil engineer luck on dealing with this bio swale situation and looked forward to hearing the outcome, which could assist the Board in future projects.

Huntsberry addressed the finger island planters and they probably are too narrow, but they could maintain the same amount of parking and group them into two, which would be very appropriate.

Chair Kent agreed the three buildings compliment each other well. He felt the setbacks are appropriate as well as the landscaping. Larger trees should be planted along the drain way. He opposed sycamore trees and desired a better large tree. He added that intense landscaping is provided on the edges, so he did not see the benefit in requiring the finger planters.

Tambornini noted that there was a split on whether finger planters were to be included. Kent changed his position to give consensus that they be included.

Tambornini summarized the Board's comments:

- Board supports architectural design of the project and signage
- All buildings work well together
- Lighting shall return to Board for review and approval with an analysis to show the impact of interior building lighting on exterior lighting levels, and it's visibility, with the interior lighting designed to reduce exterior spillover (glow) onto of site. Use RAB dealership building as a model for the desired effect.
- Final landscape plan return to Board for approval with
  - a. Larger species trees, not necessarily on the approved frontage palette be added to the rear landscape strip next to the drainageway screening fence;
  - b. The row of trees on the southerly property line (next to Nissan) shall be changed to a larger species;
  - c. A detailed plan for the planter on the north property line be returned for review of the bio-swale and grading and planting;
  - d. Planters with trees shall be installed along the building sides, acer rubrum 'Armstrong' species was suggested as an option.

Chair Kent asked for a motion.

Dickens moved and Huntsberry seconded, to approve the project as submitted including the comments summarized by staff. Motion carried unanimously.

AYES:	Members:	Dickens, Huntsberry, Chair Kent, Alternate Summers
NOES:	Members:	None
ABSTAIN:	Members:	None
ABSENT:	Members:	Crew, Olmsted

- (6) ED07-069 Request for an Amendment to an Environmental and Design Review Permit, Use Permit, Sign Program and Lot Line Adjustment/Consolidation to remodel the existing VW/Audi auto dealership to a Nissan dealership, adjust the frontage to reflect roadway changes, increase the lot size and revise the sign program.  
**704 Francisco Blvd. West (Nissan car dealership) (Katie Korzun)**

Korzun summarized the staff report and requested that the Board review the proposed project and make recommendations to the Planning Commission as to whether it is consistent with the site and its surrounding environment as well as the Design Guidelines

and Review Criteria of the Zoning Ordinance. Any recommendation for approval should include a condition that the building lighting plan and any parking lot lights, if proposed, return for review by the Board and that final approval include the usual 30-day lighting review requirement.

Dickens asked staff if the red towers are proposed to be illuminated. Korzun indicated that it is not shown, so she referred that question to the applicant. Also, all monument signs are 21 feet high.

Dickens stated that Sheet G2 that shows a site data table, but the site plan does not match the area and desired clarification. In regard to 13.8% landscaping, he asked staff if that computation included for that drainage area in the back. Korzun responded that it does not because it is not developable area. Staff noted that the area is included in the FAR calculation. Staff added that City code is clear in regard to inclusion of habitat area in FAR calculations but is not clear on landscaping calculations.

Huntsberry asked staff if Nissan owns the sliver of land that is located behind the building. Korzun responded that the long sliver of land is owned by Mr. Sonnen and right now it is one piece of property that starts at the sanitary sewer. They are taking the site and dividing it up between the two dealership properties. Huntsberry commented on Sheet C1 and asked staff if there is a reciprocal access easement for parking. Korzun responded that the parking stalls are VW's and the backup area is Nissan's. At the Planning Commission level they will discuss easement, but staff will make sure it is addressed.

Huntsberry is stated he has been in the service area many times and has seen that 50% of what is shown on the plan as employee parking is being used for new car storage and if that continues in the future he expressed concern for employee parking. Korzun deferred to the applicant.

Kit Wong, architect, briefly discussed the site issues and explained that the site is a very tight lot adjacent to Highway 101. The new Caltrans overpass is being constructed right in front of the dealership, which is a very high structure. The frontage of the existing Nissan dealership has diminished from this new overpass. They desired some display of new vehicles and customer parking. The site is located in a flood zone. They will be replanting the native area. There is a sanitary easement as well on this site. In regard to signage, the Nissan program does include an illuminated sign, but that has not been discussed in detail. Lighting has not been completely resolved, but they desired some lighting on the sign. Also, they are well aware of the reciprocal easement and they would very much like to put that in place and it is part of the concept of merging the lots together to bring both parcels in compliance with FAR. In regard to basement parking, the employee count is a code-required calculation. The actual number of employees is less than the code calculation and that is why space not used is given to storage of new vehicles, so proposed parking can be adjusted. He then provided a few slides in order to give the Board a sense of the site.

Dickens commented on the pylon supports being internally illuminated bright red and there would be complaints in that regard and asked the architect to re-think that approach because then in reality the whole area should be computed as sign. He indicated that no one would deny that the upper part of the sign and Nissan logo should be properly illuminated. Architect Wong explained that the column portion of the sign is not proposed to be internally illuminated only the face portion.

Huntsberry noted that Sheet L1 would clarify any questions in regard to landscaping, which is the entire landscape plan for both properties.

Chair Kent opened the public hearing on this item.

Helen Simcox, trailer park resident, opposed this project due to noise impacts from the operation, including arguments, screeching tires and car alarms. She requested that a sound wall be constructed rather than the chain link fence that is currently between their properties. In regard to landscaping, she objected to sycamore trees being planted.

There being no further public testimony on this item, the Chair closed the public hearing and brought the matter back to the Board for discussion and action.

Huntsberry appreciated the curve façade on the front wall of the Nissan dealership being retained. He sympathized with the concern of the neighbor in regard to noise impacts and asked staff the zoning for the trailer park land. Korzun responded it is Francisco Blvd. West Commercial, so the trailer park is an existing non-conforming use and residential is not an allowed use. Staff noted that a sound wall is not required by code, but it could be requested by the Board or Commission.

Huntsberry indicated that he could support the Nissan project as presented with the exception that they add a 6-foot block wall between the trailer park and the Nissan building.

Alternate Summers agreed it is a tight site and would have loved more landscaping, but after the presentation by the architect and studying the plans he realized that it is not possible. Regardless of the fact that there is an existing non-conforming use next door, it is indeed used as residential and agreed with the sound wall in order to be sensitive to the neighbors. He further noted that he could support the project as presented.

Dickens disagreed with the sound wall and did not feel it is appropriate to require this applicant to construct a sound wall, which historically have questionable value. He would recommend that staff work out some type of screening separation, but not a permanent block wall. He added that it is a handsome project and is satisfied that the applicant does not intend to internally illuminate those red pylon signs. Also, he was assured that there are no sycamore trees proposed for this property. He further noted support for the project.

Chair Kent agreed the project is well designed. He felt the landscaping makes sense. He agreed with staff that the trees near the drainage way could be enlarged and that would also include the trees behind the Nissan dealership, which did not need to conform to the plant palette. Also, the shrub in front does not comply with the plant palette and recommended replacing that plant with another specie from the approved plant palette. As for the sound wall, he is not convinced that the sound wall will mitigate the noise impacts.

Huntsberry supported the recommendation in regard to planting larger trees.

Tambornini summarized the Board's comment:

- Board supports concept as presented
- Conduct a study in regard to sound screening
- No consensus on a sound wall
- Recommendation that trees behind Nissan dealership on the common boundary line be enlarged and not necessarily conform to the plant palette
- The shrub in front be replaced with another tree from the approved plant palette

Korzun asked the Board if there is any building up lighting should that come back to the Board for review or leave that matter to staff. The Board desired to review any proposed lighting on this site.

Chair Kent asked for a motion.

Alternate Summers moved and Dickens seconded, to approve as submitted with the following:

- The trees behind the building, i.e., along the drainageway and side boundaries, be changed to a larger species, not necessarily one on the approved Francisco Blvd West frontage palette;
- Replace the ceanothus with another more suitable species, as this ceanothus tends to grow more as a shrub;
- Work with staff to develop a sound screening method between the dealership and adjacent residential mobile homes;
- Illumination of the pylon sign shall be limited to sign/graphic portion only, and pylon will not be illuminated;
- A lighting plan for the exterior of the building and any light standards that may be added to the front display area shall return to the Board for approval prior to building permit.

Motion carried unanimously.

AYES:	Members:	Alternate Summers, Dickens, Chair Kent, Huntsberry
NOES:	Members:	None
ABSTAIN:	Members:	None
ABSENT:	Members:	Crew, Olmsted

**ADJOURNMENT**

By order of the Chair, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jessica Woods, Recording Secretary