



Planning Commission Staff Report

October 22, 2014
Item 5.b.

- SUBJECT:** P14-1164
- APPLICANT:** Ravi Cherukuri and Greg Kawahara
- PROPERTY OWNER:** Ravi Cherukuri and Samata Kanagala
- PURPOSE:** Application for Design Review approval to construct a two-story custom home
- GENERAL PLAN:** Low Density Residential (< 2.0 du/ac)
- ZONING:** PUD – LDR (Planned Unit Development – Low Density Residential) District
- LOCATION:** 2523 Yolanda Court (Lot 2 of Tract 7499)
- EXHIBITS:**
- A. [Draft Conditions of Approval, October 22, 2014](#)
 - B. [Proposed Plans, dated "Received September 27, 2014" including building floor plans and elevations, building materials and colors, perspectives, landscape plan, grading and drainage plan, site plan, and green-point checklist, and a scanned copy of the material/color board](#)
 - C. [Zoning Administrator's Approval Letter for PUD-01-19M dated October 20, 2014](#)
 - D. [Tree Report for 2523 Yolanda Court, dated May 12, 2014, prepared by HortScience](#)
 - E. [Ordinance No. 1877 and Design Guidelines for PUD-01-01M, dated March 4, 2003](#)
 - F. [Email from East Bay Regional Park District, dated May 9, 2014](#)
 - G. [Location Map and Public Notification Area](#)
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I. BACKGROUND

Background

Ravi Cherukuri and Greg Kawahara have submitted their applications for PUD-01-019M, Minor Modification of the approved PUD Development Plan (PUD-01-01M), and P14-1164, Design Review Approval for their custom home located on 2523 Yolanda Court, Lot 2 of Tract 7499. This will be the third residence of the five-lot Yolanda Court subdivision (Tract 7499) to be reviewed by the Planning Commission.

PUD-01

In 2001, the City Council approved PUD-01, the PUD Development Plan for Delco Builders to subdivide the properties at 2287 Vineyard Avenue and 2503 Vineyard Avenue into 38 lots for single-family production homes. Six lots were approved on the 2503 Vineyard Avenue site with four lots placed on the north side of Vineyard Avenue and two lots placed on the south side of Vineyard Avenue.

PUD-01-01M

On March 4, 2003, the City Council introduced Ordinance No. 1877 that approved PUD-01-01M, a Major Modification of the PUD-01 Development Plan for the 2503 Vineyard Avenue site. The City Council approved five lots (2505 – 2529 Yolanda Court) on the north side of Vineyard Avenue, accessed by Yolanda Court, a public street, and one lot (733 Vineyard Terrace) on the south side of Vineyard Avenue accessed from Vineyard Terrace through a shared access driveway, and replaced Delco's production home designs on these lots with custom homes subject to design guidelines.

Ms. Linda Chavez of the East Bay Regional Park District spoke at the City Council Public Hearing on PUD-01-01M and stated the Park District's support of the proposed modification. She stated that this portion of Shadow Cliffs Regional Park is a relatively passive, natural area of the park and that the Park District wants to maintain the natural ambience of this area. Ms. Chavez stated that the Park District has always requested the City to only allow low residential densities on this site and to limit the building heights and bulk so as to maintain a gentle transition and sensitivity from the development to the Park District property.

The City Council responded to the East Bay Regional Park District's concerns regarding building height and bulk by: 1) limiting the maximum building height to 23 feet; 2) limiting the maximum floor area for these lots to 40 percent of the lot area or 4,200 square feet, whichever is less; 3) counting garage floor area over 600 square feet as part of the floor area ratio; and 4) requiring any second floor living areas built into the buildings' attic spaces to be equipped with dormers or flat skylights only facing south (i.e., Yolanda Court). The City Council also required that the East Bay Regional Park District be notified and sent plans of the development requests on these lots, and that the building designs shall be submitted to the Planning Commission for its review of the proposed design, including orientation to Shadow Cliffs Regional Park.

PUD-01-19M

PUD-01-19M is the PUD Minor Modification of PUD-01-01M to increase the maximum building area for this site from 4,200 square feet to 5,200 square feet to accommodate the single-family home proposed under P14-1164. Exhibit C is a copy of the Zoning Administrator's approval. Copies of the proposed plans for PUD-01-19M and P14-1164 were sent to Ms. Anne Rivoire of the East Bay Regional Park District for comment before the PUD Minor Modification was noticed. Exhibit F is Ms. Rivoire's written response stating the Park District's support of PUD-01-19M and P14-1164.

The Zoning Administrator approved PUD-01-19M to allow the additional floor area for the following reasons:

1. The Park District's written support of the proposed increase in floor area based on the proposed design drawings;
2. The design quality of the proposal;
3. The increase in floor area would not increase the 23-foot building height for this site or modify development standards for setbacks; and
4. No person that received the notice of the minor modification called or visited the Planning Division to comment or oppose the proposed application.

The Zoning Administrator will approve PUD-01-19M on October 20, 2015, after the public notice period ends on October 17, 2014, and that will become effective on November 10, 2014. The Planning Commission can review and act on P14-1164 at its public hearing. As conditioned, if PUD-01-19M is appealed and denied as a result of the appeal, the P14-1164 design approval will then expire with no further force and effect. The applicants will then have to redesign their home and then resubmit a new application for Design Review Approval for the revised building design.

II. SITE DESCRIPTION

Subject Property

Lot 2, the subject property, is one of the five lots subdivided under Tract 7499. The subject site is an irregularly-shaped lot, approximately 15,966 square feet (0.37 acres) in area. It slopes gently downward from Yolanda Court to the north property line towards the Shadow Cliffs Regional Park property. A 10-foot wide private storm drain easement is located along the entire north property line with a buried storm drain pipe draining Lots 1 through 5 to the ponds in the Shadow Cliffs Regional Park.

Shadow Cliffs Regional Park is a former gravel quarry. The excavation that occurred north of the site created a steep 1:1 (45-degree angle) slope bank along the entire north side of the site and the four other lots of Tract 7499, requiring a 30-foot deep

geotechnical setback for habitable structures¹ for Lot 2 (2523 Yolanda Court) through Lot 5 (2505 Yolanda Court). The 30-foot geotechnical setback is also the minimum rear building setback for these four sites². This slope stability setback is shown on Tract 7499 and supersedes the 20-foot minimum rear yard setback required by the PUD development plan.

Non-habitable structures such as pools, spas, or gazebos, however, may be located to within 20 feet of the rear property line, within the 30-foot geotechnical setback area, based on the review and recommendation of a qualified geotechnical engineer and to the satisfaction of the Chief Building and Safety Official and the City Engineer.

Figure 1, below, is the 2005 aerial photograph/location map of the site, six-lot subdivision of Tract 7499, and the surrounding area.

Figure 1: 2005 Aerial Photograph and Location Map



¹ Shown on Tract 7499 based on an updated geotechnical analysis prepared after PUD-01-01M was approved by the City Council and Ordinance No. 1877 became effective.

² The geotechnical building setback for Lot 1 of Tract 7499 (2529 Yolanda Court), however, is 20 feet, matching the rear building setback of the PUD 01-01M.

Figure 2, below, is a photograph of the site from Yolanda Court.

Figure 2: Project Site from Yolanda Court



Adjacent Uses

Adjacent land uses include the Shadow Cliffs Regional Park property to the north, a developed residential lot to the east (2517 Yolanda Court), a vacant residential lot of Tract 7499 to the west (2529 Yolanda Court), and residential uses to the south across Vineyard Avenue.

Shadow Cliffs Regional Park was a former gravel quarry. When the quarry operations stopped, the property was conveyed to the East Bay Regional Park District and was allowed to fill with water from the Arroyo Del Valle. The pond directly behind the project site is separated from the main lake of Shadow Cliffs Regional Park by a levee.

Figure 3 and Figure 4, below, are photographs of the residence and vacant site that are adjacent to the project site.

Figure 3: Adjoining Residence on 2517 Yolanda Court



Figure 4: Adjoining Flag Lot on 2529 Yolanda Court



The proposed front door, entry porch, and two guest parking spaces face the angled southerly side of the property; patios and yard areas face the north side of the property; and the garages, parking court, and entrance driveway face the east property line of the site directly opposite the driveway and garage areas of the adjoining home.

For the purpose of comparing the proposed building setbacks to the development standards of the PUD Development Plan, staff considers the Yolanda Court property line as the front property line for this site, the north property line by Shadow Cliffs Regional Park as the rear property line, the east and west property lines as the side property lines, and the southerly angled property line as the side property line.

Table 1 and Table 2, below, demonstrate the proposed project’s conformance to the development standards specified for Lot 2 and for the proposed residence and the open trellis in the rear yard.

Table 1: PUD Development Standards for Lot 2

| | Development Standards | Proposed Project |
|---------------------------------|--|--|
| Front Yard Setback | 25 feet | 73 feet |
| Side Yard Setback (East) | 10 feet | 15 feet |
| Side Yard Setback (West) | 10 feet | 10 feet |
| Rear Yard Setback | 30 feet | 31 feet |
| Building Height | 23 feet, measured from the lowest to highest parts of the structure | 22 feet, 10 inches, measured from the lowest to highest parts of the structure |
| Floor Area Ratio (FAR) | 40% or 4,200 sq. ft., whichever is less. | 32.4%, or 5,171 sq. ft. (209 sq. ft. of garage area is also counted towards the FAR limit and 4,200 sq. ft.) |
| Second Story Windows | Limited to only dormers or skylights facing the structure’s south side – Yolanda Court | Two window dormers and nine flat skylight windows facing Yolanda Court |

Table 2: PUD Development Standards for Accessory Structures

| | Development Standards | Proposed Rear Yard Trellis |
|---------------------------------|---|---|
| Side Yard Setback (East) | 10 feet | 15 feet |
| Side Yard Setback (West) | 10 feet | 64 feet |
| Rear Yard Setback | 20 feet | 21 feet |
| Building Height | 15 feet, measured from the lowest to highest parts of the structure | 10 feet, measured from the lowest to highest parts of the structure |

The proposed building’s one- and two-car garages would be accessed from a parking court located on the east side of the residence facing the east property line. The two-car garage provides a 31-foot back-out space to the edge of the driveway and the one-

car garage provides a 24-foot back-out space to the edge of the parking court. Staff finds the proposed back-up distance in the parking court to be acceptable for a private residence even it may not technically conform to the 25-foot back-out standard applied to public parking areas.

Guest parking spaces would be provided by a one-car parking space on the north side of the parking court, and two parking spaces provided in a parking area between the building's entrance and the southerly property line. A total of three guest parking spaces are provided in addition to the on-street parking that is allowed on the north side of Yolanda Court.

The driveway material would be paved pervious brick pavers to allow water to percolate and, as shown on the project's perspective renderings, to allow grasses to grow between the pavers to minimize the appearance of the paved driveway/parking areas. The applicant also proposes a combination of landscape separations between the paved areas of the proposed project and the building and property lines and a raised planter in the parking area facing Yolanda Court to further buffer the paved areas of the proposed project. The driveway width varies from 11 feet by the proposed residence to 17 feet at Yolanda Court. The slope of the driveway apron is approximately 11- to 12-percent, which is acceptable to the City's Building and Engineering Divisions and to the Livermore-Pleasanton Fire Department.

Building Design

The proposed building design features traditional style architecture with stucco and hardiplank wall finishes, stone wainscots on portions of the building elevations, and warm-toned colors. Architecture elements include windows and doors recessed into the building walls, wood or stone trim on the window sills and headers, decorative entrance door, stone wainscots, windows with grids on the windows' upper half portions, and paneled garage doors.

The second floor/attic area is designed into the roof area in compliance with the PUD conditions and design guidelines with light and air to the second floor provided by a combination of dormer windows and skylights. Wall colors include, respectively, light beige and medium beige stucco wall and dormer colors, medium grey stone wainscots, medium grey stone window sills and headers, dark brown windows, French doors, and sliding doors, and dark brown building trim and eave colors. (The material/color board for the proposed residence will be presented to the Planning Commission at the public hearing.)

The proposed roof is a 4:12 roof pitch. The application is conditioned to change the proposed composition shingle roof materials to a flat concrete tile material in compliance with the design guidelines. The applicant concurs with this requirement.

Building heights, volumes, and wall surfaces are varied achieving a high level of design quality. Staff considers the proposed building design including materials, colors, and detailing to be consistent with the requirements of the design guidelines for varied building forms that achieve visual interest, that complement the appearance of the

There are three existing California black walnut trees on the project site with the following trunk diameters: 16-inches for Tree #45, 17 inches for Tree #60, and 10 inches for the multi-trunked Tree #59. The attached tree report evaluated the trees as to trunk diameter, health, value, suitability for preservation, and their Heritage tree status. The tree analysis identified Tree #59 as a Heritage tree, but recommends that all three existing California black walnut trees be removed due to their health or because they have low suitability for preservation. The appraised value of the three trees is \$6,000.

The City's Landscape Architect reviewed the tree report and concurs with the conclusions that the three black walnut trees should be removed and that the amount and type of new landscaping to be planted, including new trees, more than offsets their value. PUD-01-01M requires the applicant to plant one, 24-inch box size tree specimen to mitigate the removal of Tree #59. The applicant concurs with this requirement, which can be satisfied by changing one, 15-gallon size tree to a 24-inch box size tree.

Grading, Drainage, and Utilities

Minimal grading – less than 12 inches of cut or fill – is required for the proposed building and driveway. As conditioned, the roof areas will drain to the landscape areas to pre-filter the storm water runoff before it enters the existing storm drain inlets located near the northwest and northeast corners of the site. The inlets, in turn, are connected to a storm drain pipe in the 10-foot storm drain easement along the north side of the site. Implementing this requirement will require revision to the proposed grading plan. An erosion control plan is required for review and approval prior to the issuance of a building permit. The applicant concurs with these requirements.

No grading is proposed in the geotechnical setback area except for a relatively small amount of fill area in the rear yard to accommodate flat patios and a proposed trellis. As conditioned, the proposed grading and structures are subject to outside review and recommendation by a geotechnical engineer and then approval by the City Engineer before the issuance of a grading permit. The applicant concurs with this requirement.

As conditioned, if grading and/or tree removal begins during the raptor-nesting season (February 1 to August 31), the applicant is required to provide a focused survey prepared by a qualified biologist for raptor nests on the site and on the trees along the north property line of the project site. If nesting raptors are found during the survey, no grading or tree removal shall occur within 500 feet of the active nest(s) until the young have fledged, as determined by the biologist. The applicant concurs with this requirement.

Green Building Measures

The attached Green Building checklist shows that the proposed development would achieve 50 points, consistent with the City's ordinance. As conditioned, the final Green Building measures and score will be determined with the review of the building permit application. The State of California's Green Building Standards Code, "CALGreen," shall also apply.

East Bay Regional Park District

Staff referred the project to the East Bay Regional Park District for comment. Exhibit F is attached and states the Park District's support of the proposed project.

V. PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notices were sent to the property owners and tenants within a 1,000-foot radius of the property, including the East Bay Regional Park District. Exhibit H is the notification area. Except for the comment letter from the East Bay Regional Park District, staff has not received any other written or verbal comments on the proposed project. Staff will forward comments to the Planning Commission as they are received.

VI. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Environmental review for the proposed project was completed with the adopted Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration for PUD-01 in conformance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The physical environment has not significantly changed since that time; no new information or changed circumstances which require additional CEQA review have been identified to the City. Because the proposed project is a single-family residence on a legal parcel of record that would have a negligible effect on the environment, the Mitigated Negative Declaration can be used to cover the proposed project in conformance with the standards of the CEQA. For this reason, no separate environmental document accompanies the Planning Commission staff report for this item.

VII. CONCLUSION

The proposed home is an attractive addition to the Vineyard Avenue area and is designed or conditioned to conform to the PUD development plan and design guidelines. The proposed project is compatible in terms of site and building design with the development pattern of the surrounding neighborhoods.

VIII. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Planning Commission approve P14-1164 subject to the draft conditions of approval listed in Exhibit A.

Staff Planner: Marion Pavan, 925.931.5610 or mpavan@ci.pleasanton.ca.us