



**CITY OF SOUTH PASADENA  
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD**

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2023 AT 6:30 P.M.**

**CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
1424 MISSION STREET, SOUTH PASADENA, CA 91030**

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**CALL TO ORDER:**

Chair Nichols called the Regular Design Review Board meeting to order on Thursday, September 7, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. The meeting was conducted as an in-person meeting from the Council Chambers located at 1424 Mission Street, South Pasadena, California.

**ROLL CALL  
PRESENT:**

Brian Nichols, Chair  
Melissa Hon Tsai, Vice-Chair  
Samantha Hill, Board Member  
Kay Younger, Board Member

**ABSENT:**

Joe Carlson, Board Member

**STAFF  
PRESENT:**

Matt Chang, Planning Manager  
Sandra Robles, Associate Planner  
Lillian Estrada, Administrative Secretary

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Majority vote of the Board to proceed with Board business.

There were no changes requested and the Agenda was approved as submitted.

**DISCLOSURE OF SITE VISITS AND EX-PARTE CONTACTS**

Disclosure by Board of site visits and ex-parte contact for items on the agenda.

Board Member Younger stated she drove by the site at 1990 Winding Lane.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

**1. Public Comment – General (Non-Agenda Items)**

None.

**CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS**

- 2. Minutes from the Regular Meeting of 1/6/22**
- 3. Minutes from the Regular Meeting of 2/3/22**
- 4. Minutes from the Regular Meeting of 9/1/22**
- 5. Minutes from the Special Meeting of 9/1/22**
- 6. Minutes from the Regular Meeting of 10/6/22**

The Consent Calendar items were approved as submitted.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**7. 1990 Winding Lane (APN: 5320-018-018), Project No. 2575-DRX:**

A request for a Design Review Permit (DRX) to add 157-square-foot, first-floor addition and a 902-square-foot, second-story addition to an existing 1,780-square-foot one-story single-family dwelling at 1990 Winding Lane (APN: 5320-018-018). The project also includes the demolition of a 96-square-foot office; an expansion of the front patio to 142 square feet; and a new rear trellis totaling 564 square feet. In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), this project qualifies for Categorical Exemption under Section 15301, Class 1 (Existing Facilities).

**Recommendation:**

Find the project exempt from CEQA pursuant to Section 15301. Approve the project, subject to the recommended conditions of approval.

**Presentation:**

Vice-Chair Tsai recused herself, as she is the architect of the subject property.

Associate Planner Robles presented the staff report.

There were no questions for staff.

**Applicant Presentation:**

Applicant/Architect Melissa Tsai stated she did not have a presentation but wanted to speak about the project. She stated that because the owners have a large family with four children, they needed additional room and the pool gave them no choice but to build up. She added that the ADU would also provide a home office and had to go above the garage, as there was no other place for it.

Board Member Hill asked Ms. Tsai about the planting in the rear and if it was going to change given the concerns from the backyard neighbor for privacy.

Ms. Tsai stated that there was no plan to change the landscaping since they are building on the existing footprint and there are large trees between the two homes. She added that she measured on Google Earth from the neighbor's house to the subject house's property and it is more than 100 feet from the first story and 115 feet from the second story. Ms. Tsai stated that most of the back windows of the subject property are on the staircase with one additional small bathroom window and one bedroom window.

Board Member Younger stated she drove by subject home and the backyard neighbor's property and noticed a huge swath of trees between the two properties.

Chair Nichols asked if the metal roof and composition roof would have matching colors.

Ms. Tsai stated that the roofs would match in color.

**Public Comments:**

Mr. Steve Tsai, the neighbor immediately to the south of the property, stated there is a window on the south side of the property and he is concerned about privacy. Mr. Tsai asked if the design could be modified.

Chair Nichols asked Ms. Tsai if she would like the opportunity for a three-minute rebuttal.

Ms. Tsai stated that the window that concerns the neighbor is in the kitchen of the proposed ADU. She added that they gave the size of the window a lot of thought and this felt balanced for the façade.

Chair Nichols closed the public comment portion of the meeting and opened up a discussion among the Board Members.

**Board Member Discussion:**

Board Member Hill stated that the design is balanced and she liked the variation in the roofline. She added that the window on the south side of the property appears to overlook the neighbor's garage. She stated that two of windows of

concern on the east side are on staircases. She said privacy concerns are understandable, however, it is part of living in a community.

Board Member Younger stated that her neighbors have a window that looks onto her balcony and backyard and they put in blinds to help everyone feel comfortable.

Board Member Hill suggested the neighbors plant tall hedges or the applicant add frosted windows as possible solutions to privacy concerns. She added that no one seems to have any design or structural concerns—just privacy concerns.

Board Member Younger stated that she liked the design and rooflines.

Chair Nichols added that the house to the east is a two-story house that sits up higher than this proposed addition and probably has windows looking down into the proposed addition. He stated that the window in the ADU looks out on to the south neighbor's garage. He added that he appreciated that the second story was pushed back.

Chair Nichols asked if there was a grade change between the property and the backyard neighbor.

Ms. Tsai stated there was not much of a grade change between properties.

Chair Nichols stated that the proposed second story was lower than the backyard neighbor's second story so he was even less concerned about privacy.

Board Member Hill stated that the project is straightforward and well done and privacy concerns can be addressed.

**Action and Motion:**

MOTIONED BY BOARD MEMBER YOUNGER AND SECONDED BY BOARD MEMBER HILL, CARRIED 4-0, to approve the project with conditions of approval.

<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>
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**8. Comments from Board Members**

None.

**9. Comments from Subcommittees**

None.

**10. Comments from Staff**

Planning Manager Chang stated that there would be a Joint Planning Commission/Design Review Board Meeting on September 20, 2023 at 6:30pm to discuss objective development standards for multiple family and mixed-use projects. He added there would be two City Council Meetings in September on the 18<sup>th</sup> and on the 27<sup>th</sup> to discuss the proposed General Plan and the Downtown

Specific Plan as well as to discuss the zoning code update. Planning Manager Chang thanked the Board for their work and participation.

**ADJOURNMENT**

11. **Adjourn to the regular Design Review Board meeting scheduled for October 5, 2023 at 6:30 p.m.**

There being no further matters, Chair Nichols adjourned the Design Review Board meeting at 7:00 p.m.

APPROVED,



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Brian Nichols, Chair – Design Review Board

2-5-24

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Date