



DESIGN REVIEW BOARD RECORD OF DECISION

Meeting Date September 26, 2024 **DRB Case No.** PDR-003429-2024

Address 137 Aspen Oak Lane

Applicant Alen Malekian

Project Summary:

To construct a new 4,103 square-foot, three-story single-family residence with an attached three-car garage on a 31,955 square-foot hillside, vacant lot with an average current slope of 66 percent, located in the R1R-III (Restricted Residential - Floor Area Ratio District III) zone.

Design Review:

Board Member	Motion	Second	Yes	No	Absent	Abstain
Lockareff			X			
Kaskanian			X			
Simonian		X	X			
Tchaghayan					X	
Welch	X		X			
Totals			4	0	1	
DRB Decision		Approved with conditions				

Conditions

1. Update landscape and irrigation plan to indicate planting of four coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) trees within the public right-of-way and obtain the required permits from Urban Forestry prior to construction.
2. Work with Planning staff to restudy the use of the exterior materials to improve the design and reduce the visual massing.

Determination of Compatibility: Site Planning

The project's **site planning** is appropriate to the site and its surroundings for the following reasons:

- The new three-story house follows the site's topography, which slopes sharply upward from the street frontage. The design is integrated into the up-sloped terrain with the upper stories stepping back from the street frontage. The pool deck and open patio at the side and rear also follow the existing natural terrain and are well-integrated into the design and existing topography.
- New retaining walls with the maximum height of 5 feet will have stone cladding, which complements the building design. The retaining wall at the rear of the house will be 13 feet in height (maximum 15 feet). New landscaping is proposed along the walls to reduce visual impacts.
- New drought-tolerant landscaping is proposed and the plant palette illustrated on the landscape plans complements the building design. While there are no protected trees on or within 20-feet of the project site, the Public Works Urban Forestry Division will require four coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) trees to be planted within the public right-of-way. A condition of approval is added requiring the applicant to update the landscape and irrigation plans to comply with this requirement and obtain all required permits from Urban Forestry prior to construction.
- The design and location of the attached garage and driveway (with decorative pavers) are compatible with the overall design of the primary structure. The new driveway with access from the southeast corner of the site will be approximately 83 feet long and 11.5 feet wide, with a maximum 20 percent slope.

The project's **massing and scale** are appropriate to the site and its surroundings for the following reasons:

- The mass and scale of the new 4,103 square-foot, three-story house with an attached three-car garage and pool deck are appropriate to the site and relate to the surrounding context of three-story homes with various architectural styles. The design presents appropriate proportions and transitions in mass and scale in relation to the site topography and surroundings. The new design follows the Hillside Design Guidelines as it is built into the up-sloped lot and follows the natural terrain.
- The overall mass and scale reinforce the contemporary Modern architectural concept appropriately.
- The overall height of the proposed house is 32 feet which meets the maximum height limit for primary buildings in the R1R zone.
- The proposed flat roof and overhangs are appropriate to the design concept.

Determination of Compatibility: Design and Detailing

The project's **design and detailing** are appropriate, as modified by conditions, to the site and its surroundings for the following reasons:

- The architectural details and colors of the design reinforce the proposed contemporary Modern architectural concept and include long thin brick, smooth stucco finish, synthetic horizontal wood siding, streamlined roof form, large roof overhangs, steel posts, stucco finish columns, generous use of glass surfaces, and glass railings. For better distribution of exterior materials and colors, a condition of approval is added requiring the applicant to work with Planning staff to restudy the use of the exterior materials in order to improve the design and reduce the visual massing.
- The location and design of the front on-grade concrete steps are appropriate to the design and reinforce the proposed Modern design concept.
- The proposed house will not create privacy conflicts with the surrounding neighbors across the street (south side) as well as the proposed adjacent house located at 157 Aspen Oak Lane (west side). There are no direct views from windows of public rooms and outdoor spaces to neighboring homes; and significant distances to the existing neighboring homes and their outdoor spaces, landscape buffers, and building's orientation help block views from the subject development to the existing neighboring homes as well as the proposed house at 157 Aspen Oak Lane.
- The proposed fenestration complements the design concept and features recessed black color Aluminum clad windows with an appropriate combination of casement and fixed operation without exterior sill and trim.
- The project proposes internal gutters. New air-conditioning units and trash storage bins are appropriately located out of public view.
- The proposed design and location of the light fixtures appear appropriate to the overall design.

DRB Staff Member Aileen Babakhani, Senior Planner

Notes:

Contact the case planner for an appointment for a DRB stamp prior to submittal for plan check.

The Design Review Board approves the design of project only. Approval of a project by the Design Review Board does not constitute an approval of compliance with the Zoning Code and/or Building Code requirements.

If an appeal is not filed within the **15-day appeal** period of the Design Review Board decision, plans may be approved for Building Division plan check. Prior to Building Division plan check submittal, Design Review Board approved plans must be stamped approved by the Design Review staff.

Any changes to the approved plans may constitute returning to the Design Review Board for approval. Prior to Building Division plan check submittal, all changes in substantial conformance with approved plans by the Design Review Board must be on file with the Planning Division.