

City of Alamo Heights
ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD
MINUTES
January 16, 2024

The Architectural Review Board held a regular meeting at the Council Chambers of the City of Alamo Heights, located at 6116 Broadway St, San Antonio, Texas, and via Zoom with teleconference on Tuesday, January 16, 2024, at 5:30 p.m.

Members present and composing a quorum of the Board:

John Gaines, Chairman
Ashley Armes
Larry Gottsman
Phil Solomon
Lyndsay Thorn
Clay Hagendorf, Alternate

Members absent:

Adam Kiehne
Grant McFarland
Mac White, Alternate

Staff members present:

Phil Laney, Assistant City Manager
Richard Lindner, City Attorney
Lety Hernandez, Director of Community Development Services
Dakotah Procell, Planner

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Gaines at 5:37 p.m.

Mr. Gottsman moved to approve the November 21, 2023 meeting minutes as presented. Ms. Armes seconded the motion.

The motion was approved with the following vote:

FOR: Gaines, Armes, Gottsman, Solomon, Thorn, Hagendorf
AGAINST: None

Chairman Gaines announced the December 19, 2023 meeting minutes were not available for review and rescheduled for the next meeting. No action was taken.

A motion was made by Mr. Gottsman to hear case 914F after hearing case 917P. Mr. Thorn seconded the motion.

The motion was approved with the following vote:

FOR: Gaines, Armes, Gottsman, Solomon, Thorn, Hagendorf

AGAINST: None

Case No. 915F – Request of Mert Firat, applicant, for permanent signage at 5231 Broadway St, Suite 105 (SA Botanicals).

Ms. Hernandez presented the case. The applicant was not present to address the board.

Mr. Solomon moved to table the case for the February 20, 2024 meeting due to the absence of the applicant. Ms. Armes seconded the motion.

The motion was approved with the following vote:

FOR: Gaines, Armes, Gottsman, Solomon, Thorn, Hagendorf

AGAINST: None

Case No. 912F – Request of Aaron Recko & Cosmo Guido, owners, for the significance review of the existing main structure and compatibility review of the proposed design located at 255 Claywell Dr in order to demolish 100% of the existing residence and construct a new single-family residence with detached garage under Demolition Review Ordinance No. 1860 (April 12, 2010).

Ms. Hernandez presented the case. Mr. Recko was present via teleconference and addressed the board. He spoke regarding the revised elevations.

Chairman Gaines opened the public hearing at 5:53pm.

Those requesting to speak regarding the case were as follows:

Yvonne Santiago, 247 Claywell Dr (Via teleconference)(Neutral)

No one else requested to speak regarding the case. Chairman Gaines closed the public hearing at 5:57pm.

Concerns of those speaking regarding the case were the placement of a fence within the easement and its effect on the adjoining property.

Mr. Hagendorf moved to declare the existing main structure as not significant and recommended approval of the demolition as requested and revised design as compatible. Mr. Gottsman seconded the motion.

The motion was approved with the following vote:

FOR: Gaines, Armes, Gottsman, Solomon, Thorn, Hagendorf

AGAINST: None

Case No. 918F – Request of Eric Baumgartner of LPA Design Studios, applicant, representing the Alamo Heights Independent School District, owner, for the significance review of an existing academic building located at 6900 Broadway St in order to demolish 100% of the existing structure fronting Broadway St and Castano Ave under Demolition Review Ordinance No. 1860 (April 12, 2010).

Ms. Hernandez presented the case. Sara Flowers of LPA Design Studios was present and addressed the board.

The board questioned whether there was consideration to utilize the existing structure. Ms. Flowers responded that they had but determined that the best path forward was to demolish and rebuild due to the structural conditions and cost analysis. She went on to speak regarding the timeline and use of portables during the construction of the replacement building. Currently, the proposal is to demolish in June after teachers empty classrooms. She added that the current building does not meet TEA standards.

An open discussion followed regarding future plans with the vacant lots across the street and expected growth. Mike Hagar was present and addressed the board.

It was stated that they were maintaining the same front and that the inner courtyard footprint was dictated by the existing trees. The front setback would also be maintained.

Chairman Gaines opened the public hearing at 6:10pm.

Those requesting to speak regarding the case were as follows:

Jessica Mitchell (Did not state address)

John Dye, Alamo Heights Historical Society (Did not state address)

Tom Romano, 122 Chester St

Robert Walker (Did not state address)

Ray Romano, 734 Patterson Ave

Sara Reveley, 436 Corona Ave

No one else requested to speak regarding the case. Chairman Gaines closed the public hearing at 6:25pm.

Concerns of those speaking regarding the case included conserving the structure no matter the cost, consideration to partially demolish, that the school board information did not state the proposal was a full demolition, and failure to enforce the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Hagar spoke to the concerns of those speaking regarding the case.

The board spoke regarding the proposed and felt that they should table the item temporarily to hear the preliminary case. At that time, Mr. Gottsman moved to table the case after hearing the Preliminary Review request. Mr. Thorn seconded the motion.

The motion was approved with the following vote:

FOR: Gaines, Armes, Gottsman, Solomon, Thorn, Hagendorf

AGAINST: None

Case No. 917P – Request of Eric Baumgartner of LPA Design Studios, applicant, representing the Alamo Heights Independent School District, owner, for the preliminary design review of the proposed construction of a new academic building on the property located at 6900 Broadway St (No action required).

Ms. Hernandez presented the case. Jim Oppelt of LPA Design Studios was present and addressed the board.

Mr. Oppelt spoke regarding the existing trees, landscaping, materials, scale of the building, and connectivity.

Ms. Armes questioned additional safety measures and Mr. Oppelt responded and spoke regarding the square footage and connectivity between the indoor and outdoor areas. An open discussion followed.

Chairman Gaines opened the public hearing at 6:45pm.

Those requesting to speak regarding the case were as follows:

Roxanna Knapp, 129 Castano

Kiech Jung, 518 Evans Ave

Ray Romano, 734 Patterson Ave

John Dye, Alamo Heights Historical Society

Debbie Brodigan, 276 Retama Pl

Robert Walker (Did not state address)

No one else requested to speak regarding the case. Chairman Gaines closed the public hearing at 6:55pm. No action was taken.

At that time, Mr. Solomon moved to reopen case 918F, Significance Review. Mr. Thorn seconded the motion.

The motion was approved with the following vote:

FOR: Gaines, Armes, Gottsman, Solomon, Thorn, Hagendorf

AGAINST: None

Case No. 918F – Request of Eric Baumgartner of LPA Design Studios, applicant, representing the Alamo Heights Independent School District, owner, for the significance review of an existing academic building located at 6900 Broadway St in order to demolish 100% of the existing structure fronting Broadway St and Castano Ave under Demolition Review Ordinance No. 1860 (April 12, 2010).

An open discussion took place where the board discussed the look of the building, exploration of conserving the original footprint, and construction. The board questioned the use of funds by the district and the cost to taxpayers. The board went on to discuss the state of the building and the preliminary design.

At that time, Mr. Solomon moved to declare the structure as not significant and recommended approval of the demolition as requested. Mr. Hagendorf seconded the motion.

The motion failed with the following vote:

FOR: Gaines, Solomon, Hagendorf

AGAINST: Armes, Gottsman, Thorn

Discussion continued regarding significance. Ms. Armes moved to declare the existing main structure as significant. Mr. Thorn seconded the motion.

The motion failed with the following vote:

FOR: Gaines, Solomon, Hagendorf

AGAINST: Armes, Gottsman, Thorn

Case No. 914F – Request of Lisa Nichols of Nic Abbey Homes, owner, for the significance review of the existing main structure located at 231 Encino Ave in order to demolish 100% of the existing single-family residence under Demolition Review Ordinance No. 1860 (April 12, 2010).

Ms. Hernandez presented the case. James McKnight, attorney for Lisa Nichols, was present and addressed the board.

Mr. McKnight spoke regarding the original structure, previous additions, and percentage not original. A discussion followed regarding preservation and uniqueness of area.

Mr. Gottsman left quorum at 7:44pm.

Chairman Gaines opened the public hearing at 7:45pm.

Those speaking regarding the case were as follows:

Gene Mark, 345 Argyle Ave (read statement from Judy Pesek)

Michael Carol, 442 Brynmawr

Debbie Brodigan, 276 Retama Pl

Jose Gonzalez, 301 Encino Ave

Clair Alexander, 251 Encino Ave

Todd Romano, 122 Chester St

Stephen Shanfield, 122 Chester St #2

Sydney Jensen (Did not state address)(read statement from Suzanne Mathews and Susan Straus)

Ted Flato (Did not state address)

Torey Stanley Carleton, 134 Chichester

Chris Gilbert (Did not state address)(read statement from Michael Imber)

John Joseph, 206 Joliet Ave
Sid Greehey (Did not state address)
Gerald Cuda, 308 Joliet Ave
Gilbert Mathews (Did not state address)
Katie Fravell, 215 Encino Ave

Mr. Gottsman arrived and rejoined quorum at 8:07pm.

No one else requested to speak regarding the case. Chairman Gaines closed the public hearing at 8:30pm.

Concerns of those speaking regarding the case included the process, inability to fully express thoughts on projects, traffic and sense on block, city support of restoration, restoration and reimagination, architectural style, scale, and importance, lack of ordinance not allowing vacant home for certain amount of time, proposal for multiple family homes and crowding, and maintaining character and while respecting location.


At that time, Mr. Hagendorf moved to declare the existing main structure as significant and recommended denial of the requested demolition. Ms. Armes seconded the motion.

The motion to deny was approved with the following vote:

FOR: Gaines, Armes, Gottsman, Solomon, Thorn, Hagendorf
AGAINST: None

There being no further business, Mr. Gottsman moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Solomon seconded the motion followed by unanimous consent of the board. The meeting was adjourned at 08:32p.m.

THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING ARE ALSO DIGITALLY RECORDED, AND THESE MINUTES ARE ONLY A SUMMARY OF THE MEETING. THESE MINUTES ARE NOT A VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT OF THE PROCEEDINGS AND DO NOT PURPORT TO INCLUDE ALL IMPORTANT EVIDENCE PRESENTED OR STATEMENTS MADE.



John Gaines, Chairman
(Board Approval)

3/19/24

Date Signed & Filed



Lety Hernandez, Director
Community Development Services