



City of Santa Barbara California

PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

REPORT DATE: March 14, 2024
AGENDA DATE: March 21, 2024
PROJECT NAME: Single Family Design Board Process Improvements (PLN2024-00017)
TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Planning Division
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I. PURPOSE

In August 2022, the Land Development Team Oversight Subcommittee (LDTO) directed Planning staff to identify ways to streamline approvals and processes for single family residences. The LDTO's directive was a response to the Novak Group's 2020 Report "Land Development Process Improvement" in which the consultant group recommended eliminating the Single Family Design Board (SFDB) or reassigning its duties in order to streamline and simplify the City's land development process. Input from the City's land development customers highlighted that homeowners incur significant measurable and immeasurable costs, including time, money, and frustration due to the Single Family Design Review Board (SFDRB) design review process and questioned the net benefit to the final design results.

Project Goals

The purpose of this initiative is to reduce the number of SFDB projects reviewed at a public hearing and to expand opportunities for administrative (staff) review and approval. Rather than implementing the drastic measure of eliminating the SFDB, staff plan to propose code amendments and SFDB guideline updates to make the Board's role and City staff's job more straightforward and to reduce the high volume of minor projects that contribute to homeowner frustration. For context, the SFDB reviews approximately twice as many applications as the Historic Landmarks Commission and one and a half times as many as the Architectural Board of Review. Consequently, the SFDB requires two full-time staff to adequately process projects.

Our objective is to improve the customer experience while maintaining a value-added process for single-unit residential design review. This initiative would be the first significant update to the SFDB program since the Board was established in 2007. However, the proposed code amendment concepts are not intended to undermine the established purpose of the SFDB: to promote neighborhood compatibility¹; to ensure developments have an appropriate volume, bulk,

¹ A common misconception about neighborhood compatibility is that it means sameness. New and remodeled houses do not need to match existing development to be compatible. Homes are built or remodeled in order to suit the changing needs and lifestyles of new and existing residents. As a result, neighborhood character gradually changes over time. When a change is made in an established neighborhood, it is essential to properly balance that change with a respect for the design features and characteristics of surrounding properties. Homes are more likely to be compatible when their volume and bulk are at an appropriate scale with their neighbors.

massing, and scale; and to minimize privacy impacts to surrounding properties. Instead, we wish to reduce the number of *minor* projects subject to a hearing while maintaining a public forum for projects with the highest potential for neighborhood compatibility and privacy impacts.

The proposed concepts were informed through significant public outreach with key design and development community stakeholders and past and present members of the Single Family Design Board. Staff analyzed three years of SFDB project data, as well as reviewed relevant code and SFDB design guidelines to put together a comprehensive package of code amendments.

Municipal Code and SFDB Guidelines Amendments

To address SFDB process improvements, staff will return in Fall 2024 with proposed code amendments to Chapter 22.69 (Single Family Design Board) and to Title 30 (Zoning Ordinance) for process improvement amendments. In addition, there will be updates to the SFDB General Design Guidelines & Meeting Procedures. Updating the design guidelines is necessary to expand administrative approvals and to streamline review procedures including combining Project Design Approval and Final Approval. Such changes to the guidelines will include updates to approvable materials for alterations to windows, roofing, exterior finishes, etc., along with increases to the maximum floor area for small one-and two-story additions that staff may approve. The increase in administrative approvals plus the reduction in projects submitted due to proposed changes to design review triggers should result in a substantial decrease in the number of projects that require a public hearing. In the interest of time, staff have not included guideline amendment concepts for this scheduled discussion item. The design guideline amendments will be introduced with the formal code amendments in Fall 2024. This discussion is focused on the potential ordinance amendments, particularly the design review triggers.

II. BACKGROUND

Single Family Design Board History

Prior to 1992, there was no discretionary review of single-unit residential projects except for in El Pueblo Viejo and for historic buildings within the purview of the Historic Landmarks Commission. Therefore, the majority of single-unit residential development projects were not subject to any design review. The adoption of the Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance in 1992 expanded the purview of the Architectural Board of Review (ABR) to include single-unit residences with a focus on hillside homes due to their visibility. Eventually, the ABR had too many projects to review, and in 2004, a 3-year process commenced to establish a separate board to perform discretionary review of certain types of single-unit residential development.

The Single Family Design Board was established in 2007 out of a strong community desire to curtail the trend of building excessively large homes in neighborhoods with modest-sized houses, also known as “McMansionization.” House size and floor to lot area ratio (or FAR) were the main issues, and the community conversations resulted in code amendments introducing new design review triggers, a FAR limitation, and a comprehensive set of design guidelines. In the years since SFDB was established, State laws and City ordinances, including the adoption of SBMC Title 30 in October 2017, have contributed to an increase in the number of SFDB design review triggers. What was initially driven by process-improvement efforts at that time ended up placing more responsibility on the SFDB. Adding new design review triggers increased volume

of projects for SFDB to review, which also led to an impact on staff to process. Specifically, the 2017 adoption of Title 30 shifted the review responsibility from the Staff Hearing Officer or Planning Commission to the SFDB or other design review boards as a way to reduce process steps and applicant frustration. This was deemed a significant process improvement at the time. Since 2007, there have been few code changes to SFDB review, and it warrants a fresh look through the lens of process improvement.

III. RESEARCH APPROACH

For this process improvement directive, staff gathered and synthesized data using both quantitative and qualitative research methods. To begin, staff performed a comprehensive scan of relevant data on single-unit residential projects that triggered SFDB design review. This was followed by robust qualitative data gathering via one-on-one interviews with current and former SFDB board members; a survey of homeowners, architects, and land use professionals; and focus groups to discuss SFDB process improvements. Staff reviewed the project data and engagement results to understand applicants' frustrations with the process and to identify potential improvements for better customer experience.

SFDB 3-Year Project Data Analysis

Staff collected and analyzed data from 440 SFDB projects submitted between 2019 and 2022 to understand the type and scope of projects being reviewed and the frequency with which those project types are triggered for review. This period was chosen because it allowed for a reasonably sized sample of projects being processed under current code and regulations. By comparing project data with the synthesized feedback from the survey, interviews, and focus groups, staff identified opportunities to amend the current design review triggers and procedures, which are anticipated to result in an approximate 43 percent reduction in the number of projects that trigger any level of SFDB review.

Across all project types (additions, alterations, new buildings, and combinations of the three), the Hillside Design District and 2-story triggers were the most frequent design review triggers, at 51 percent and 25 percent, respectively. The remaining 33 design review triggers did not get used nearly as frequently. The third most common SFDB trigger is for upper-story decks greater than 3 feet by 7 feet, accounting for only 3 percent of all projects. Ten triggers did not get used at all, including new manufactured homes, relocated single-unit residences, and alterations in the Lower Riviera Special Design District.

Forty-five percent (199) of all SFDB projects analyzed in the 3-year dataset were for exterior alterations only, such as window changes, reroofs, new fences, and landscaping, with no change in square footage or the size and bulk of the house. These minor projects tended to be reviewed administratively without a public hearing; however, there was still a significant number of alterations-only projects (ranging from minor to major alterations) that were reviewed at SFDB Consent or Full Board. Fifty-three percent (107) of those alterations-only projects triggered SFDB review because of the property's location in the Hillside Design District, and about 16 percent (18) of the alterations-only projects triggered SFDB review because they were on an upper story.

Targeted Engagement

In addition to analyzing SFDB project data, staff sought public input through an online survey, one-on-one interviews with current and former SFDB members, focus group meetings with architects, designers, planning consultants, and developers, as well as working group sessions comprised of members of an SFDB subcommittee and AIA Santa Barbara Advocacy Group members. The online survey, administered in February 2023, was emailed to project applicants and homeowners who had presented a project before the SFDB in the last 3 years. Respondents were asked about their experience with the SFDB design review process, from application intake to project approval [See Exhibit D for the survey report]. The focused interviews with current and former board members were centered around process improvements, with specific feedback on the SFDB's existing goals, current design review triggers, and board member challenges during project review. The focus groups and subsequent working group sessions discussed SFDB design review challenges and ideas to address process improvements through a reduction in design review triggers and administrative approval criteria.

IV. DISCUSSION OF CODE AMENDMENT CONCEPTS

Below is a summary of process improvements to streamline SFDB design review. The three main categories for discussion include SFDB design review triggers, mailed noticing thresholds, and the required findings to approve a project. For brevity, we did not include every proposed change in the staff report, however, a detailed outline of proposed concepts may be found in Exhibits B, C, and D. Below each discussion section, staff included specific discussion questions. Most of the code amendments will occur in Chapter 22.69, however, there are complementary code amendments concepts proposed for Title 30, which are also discussed in this staff report.

A. Proposed Amendments to Design Review Triggers

There are currently over 35 triggers for SFDB design review. Once a project triggers SFDB design review, staff determines the appropriate level of review necessary: Administrative (staff review); Consent Calendar (minor projects); or Full Board (major projects). The primary change proposed for the design review triggers is to remove triggers for minor alterations and additions while maintaining SFDB review of projects with significant size or privacy implications or that may impact the visual character of the hillsides. The most significant proposed changes are listed below for discussion. See SBMC Chapter 22.69.020 in Exhibit A for the full text of the current design review triggers, and Exhibit B for a comparison of the current and proposed design review triggers with references to the current design review trigger code sections.

Multi-Story Buildings

The proposed change reduces the number of projects subject to SFDB review by exempting minor alterations on existing multi-story buildings. It increases thresholds for addition sizes. It also introduces major alterations as a design review trigger to mitigate potential privacy or nuisance issues or to avoid major alterations that fail to create a cohesive design or that could be construed as incompatible with the neighborhood.

Hillside Design District

The proposed change reduces the number of projects subject to SFDB review by exempting minor alterations within the Hillside Design District from design review, including reroofs involving a change in material or color. It increases thresholds for addition sizes (up to 250 square feet) and introduces major alterations² as a design review trigger.

Mission Area Design District and Lower Riviera Special Design District

The proposed amendments remove the Mission Area Design District and Lower Riviera Special Design District as SFDB design review triggers. The historically significant properties within the Mission Area and Lower Riviera design districts have been identified through survey efforts either as contributing historic resources to the Bungalow Haven Potential Historic District or the sites are included within El Pueblo Viejo II Landmark District, both of which are under the purview of the Historic Landmarks Commission.

Balconies and Elevated Decks

The proposed design review trigger makes a minor adjustment to the language, changing the square footage threshold for design review of decks from a dimension of 3 feet x 7 feet to an area of 20 square feet. The more significant change is that it exempts upper story balconies, landings, and decks if they are no larger than 200 square feet and are located at least 15 feet from any interior lot line following existing SFDB design guideline Good Neighbor Policies to avoid privacy impacts.

Feedback Requested:

Staff received broad consensus from stakeholders that most minor projects currently triggered for SFDB review do not rise to the level of needing design review at a discretionary or even administrative level. However, some stakeholders expressed interest in retaining discretionary review for major alterations that could significantly alter the building’s architectural style or present neighbor privacy issues.

1. Do you support the idea of eliminating SFDB design review triggers for *minor alterations and small additions up to 250 square feet* (would apply to multi-story buildings and sites and structures within the Hillside Design District)?

Pros:	Cons:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significantly reduces the number of projects subject to processing and review by staff and SFDB. • Widely supported by feedback received. • Saves homeowners time and facilitates basic home maintenance for small projects while avoiding design review. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less oversight over small changes such that there is the potential to aesthetically impact character defining features of existing single unit residences.

² Working Definition of Major Alteration: Any physical modification to a structure or site that involves a major portion of the structure or has a substantial visual impact on the structure or its surroundings, as determined by the Community Development Director. Examples of major alterations include but are not limited to: changes to building massing, cladding the exterior walls in a new material, or extensive replacement of windows and doors resulting in a new, modified, or disparate architectural style in a structure.

2. The proposed amendments aim to eliminate SFDB design review triggers for minor alterations and small additions. However, major alterations to multi-story buildings and projects within the Hillside Design District would continue to be subject to SFDB design review. Do you support maintaining a design review trigger for *major alterations*?

Pros:	Cons:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued oversight of design features that may have privacy or aesthetic impacts (e.g. increasing scale of fenestration, lack of cohesive architectural style, etc.). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides less leeway to homeowners and applicants in aesthetic choice for their homes. Contributes to a significant number of projects at SFDB design review hearings.

3. As currently written, the SFDB design review triggers for the Mission Area Design District and Lower Riviera Special Design District are all-encompassing, e.g. *any exterior alteration on a lot within a special design district*. Do you generally support rewriting the SFDB design review triggers to only trigger projects that are likely to have the biggest impact to adjacent properties and the surrounding neighborhood (i.e. 2nd story additions or a new multi-story residence)?

Pros:	Cons:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preserves key goal of SFDB. Maintains a public forum for projects that generate the most interest from neighbors. Incorporates more specific language than blanket triggers for “any alteration”. Acknowledges existing survey work of contributing/non-contributing properties within identified potential historic districts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In general, less aesthetic oversight for minor alterations. Minor projects exempt from design review in a neighborhood could add up, causing a cumulative impact to the streetscape.

B. Mailed Noticing Thresholds

Whenever an SFDB project is subject to a mailed notice, a public hearing is also required. Staff evaluated noticing thresholds based on frequency of use, potential project impacts, and community feedback about what types of projects warrant neighborhood notice. Noticing thresholds for projects with a larger neighborhood impact (e.g. new house, 500 square foot addition, new second story) are proposed to remain unchanged. The noteworthy changes to noticing thresholds include increased floor area for additions to existing second stories and for grading outside the main building footprint or on a vacant lot. During the analysis, staff concluded that noticing requirements are so stringent, in some instances it eliminates the opportunity to grant an administrative approval. In addition, there is no way to avoid a public hearing for a minor second story addition that did not pose a significant impact to adjacent

properties or the neighborhood. The noticing threshold changes for additional floor area and grading are modest in nature and will continue to ensure neighbor’s ability to participate at a hearing.

The SFDB noticing thresholds for Minor Zoning Exceptions (MZE) such as fences and hedges, screening, as well as uncovered parking exceptions are proposed to be removed. Suggestions from past and present SFDB Board members identified that these minor projects would be more appropriate for administrative approval (provided that specific design criteria are met), as many of the approvals are “rubber stamps” and do not elicit much public comment or concern.

Staff also propose to remove exterior lighting with glare potential as a noticing threshold. New lights are generally associated with the construction of a new residence, which is already a noticing trigger that will remain. A project proposing exterior lighting with a significant glare can be difficult for staff to determine at application intake. Plus, the City has other means to enforce on light trespass to address nuisance issues, and all lighting must comply with the City’s Outdoor Lighting regulations (SBMC Ch. 22.77).

It should be noted that if a project does not require a notice, but staff have concerns about the plans, it is staff’s discretion to refer a project to a public hearing and initiate courtesy mailed noticing. The following chart is a comparison of current and proposed SFDB noticing requirements.

Current SFDB Mailed Noticing Threshold	Proposed SFDB Mailed Noticing Threshold
New main building	No change
500 square foot addition to building or lot	No change
New second or higher story on an existing building	No change
150 square foot addition to an existing second or higher story	250 square foot addition to an existing second or higher story
250 cubic yards of Grading Outside the Main Building Footprint or on a Vacant Lot	500 Cubic Yards of Grading Outside the Main Building Footprint or on a Vacant Lot
Minor Zoning Exceptions	No Notice Required
Exterior lighting with glare potential	No Notice Required
Uncovered parking spaces exception	No Notice Required

Feedback Requested:

1. The proposed amendments would result in an increase in the mailed noticing threshold for certain projects and the elimination of certain noticing triggers. Removing the noticing requirement would help staff achieve the objective of expanding administrative approvals while still allowing for a reasonable amount of oversight. Do you support this approach?

C. Required Findings for Project Approval

The SFDB is required to make findings for all discretionary actions. In interviews and working groups, as well as in regularly scheduled SFDB hearings, many current and former SFDB members indicated that the findings required to approve a project pursuant to SBMC

22.69.050 are difficult to apply, causing board members to struggle with motion-making. The existing findings are verbose and board members often find themselves repeating information. To address this, staff asked board members for feedback on how to make the findings more relevant to the goals and purpose of the SFDB. As detailed below, the Neighborhood Preservation Findings, Hillside Findings, and Grading findings have been edited to achieve this objective. All current findings to approve a project are included in Exhibit A (see SBMC 22.69.050) for comparison.

Proposed Neighborhood Preservation Findings (required for all SFDB discretionary projects)

- a. *Compatibility and Character.* The proposed development is compatible with the site and neighborhood in its size, bulk, and scale; and the development contributes to the scenic character of the City.
- b. *Quality Architecture and Materials.* The proposed buildings and structures are designed with quality architectural details and enhance the appearance of the neighborhood.
- c. *Good Neighbor Guidelines.* The project generally complies with the Good Neighbor Guidelines regarding privacy, landscaping, noise, and lighting.
- d. *Trees.* The proposed project does not include the removal of or significantly impact any designated Specimen Tree or Historic Tree. The proposed project generally complies with the Tree and Vegetation Preservation Standards of the Single Family Design Board Guidelines.
- e. *Public Views.* The development, including proposed structures and grading, preserves significant public scenic views of and from the hillside.

Hillside Findings (applicable to lots in Hillside Design District or on a lot with 15 percent average slope)

- a. *Hillside Appearance.* The development maintains a scale and form that blends with the natural appearance of the ridgeline or hillside and does not significantly modify the natural topography of the site.

Grading Findings. (Applicable to projects subject to grading permits)

- a. The proposed grading is appropriate to the site, is designed to avoid visible scarring, includes appropriate revegetation and erosion control, and does not significantly modify the natural topography of the site or the natural appearance of any ridgeline or hillside.

Feedback Requested:

1. How do the proposed amendments to the required findings resonate with the purpose and goals of the SFDB? Is anything missing from these proposed findings that needs to be reincorporated or clarified?

D. Complementary Process Improvement Code Amendments to SBMC Title 30

In addition to proposing changes to Chapter 22.69, staff will also be proposing complementary process improvement amendments to Title 30. Together, the code amendments will achieve the objectives of: 1) expanding administrative (Community Development Director/staff level) approvals of minor projects; and 2) appointing the most appropriate review body for the type of project request. As mentioned earlier, the adoption of Title 30 included significant changes that reduced the amount of process to which homeowners and applicants were subjected. Yet after observation and input from both the 2020 Novak Report and our SFDB process improvement efforts, there are opportunities to go further to improve the customer experience by further eliminating unnecessary process. Below are two key process improvements within Title 30 that most directly relate to single unit residential development.

Minor Zoning Exceptions – Referrals by the Community Development Director

Pursuant to SBMC Title 30, Minor Zoning Exceptions (MZE) are required to be reviewed at a design review public hearing with a mailed notice. Most requests for a MZE are relatively minor in scope (fence, wall, and hedge height in front or interior setback; increase in height and volume in the interior setback; new openings in the setback on an upper floor). The most common MZE triggered at SFDB are requests to permit over-height fences and hedges. The majority of MZE requests are approved by SFDB as they elicit little feedback from neighbors. Based on interview feedback, Board Members expressed comfort in staff's ability to review and approve MZEs and generally believe that MZEs do not always need to be subjected to a public hearing. Staff concur with this sentiment and will be following up by proposing to assign the review authority over to the Community Development Director (or their staff designee) to allow greater flexibility in review of MZEs. This would allow staff to approve MZEs that meet applicable guidelines instead of automatically sending each request to a noticed public hearing. Under the proposed amendments, the Community Development Director would be able to refer any MZE request to the design review body for review and approval should there be a concern in the Director's opinion that warrants a public forum.

Maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) Waivers Reviewed by SFDB

Staff also received stakeholder feedback on the current process for reviewing Floor Area Modifications³ at Planning Commission after receiving SFDB comments. Currently, the procedure is to refer projects that result in a maximum allowable FAR above 100 percent (or above 85% when certain other factors apply) to SFDB, where the majority of members must vote in favor of the project. Following the affirmative majority vote at SFDB, the project is referred to Planning Commission for a decision. Staff support the notion that FAR Modifications are less of a land use review and have more to do with a project's mass, bulk, and site planning. Therefore, maximum required FARs that exceed 100% would be better suited to be reviewed by the design review body rather than Planning Commission. As part of future Title 30 amendments, staff would like to explore the possibility of converting the FAR Modification at Planning Commission to an FAR Design Waiver reviewed by the

³ Maximum floor area is applicable only to lots less than 15,000 developed, or proposed to be developed, with a building with two or more stories or 17 feet or more in height. Accessory Dwelling Units (no greater than 800 square feet) are included in floor area measurements, but do not trigger a modification if FAR exceeds 100%.

appropriate Design Review body. If this amendment is adopted, appeals of FAR Design Waivers granted by SFDB would still be heard by Planning Commission.

Feedback Requested:

1. Does the Planning Commission support the concept of amending Title 30 to make the Community Development Director (or their designee) the default MZE review authority, with the ability to refer MZEs to design review if needed?
2. Conceptually, does the Planning Commission agree with SFDB becoming the designated review authority for project requests that exceed 100% (or 85% as appropriate) of required FAR (creating an FAR Design Waiver)?

V. NEXT STEPS

Staff requests the Planning Commission to review these concepts and consider the specific feedback requested in order to discuss at the hearing. Following Planning Commission discussion, the draft SFDB ordinance amendments will be finalized and code amendments will be introduced in Fall 2024. This may require an additional hearing at SFDB for any items not included in this report's discussion. As part of the required process, the code amendments will be introduced at the Planning Commission, followed by the City Council Ordinance Committee, who will review the proposed amendments with consideration of the Planning Commission's recommendations. The final SFDB ordinance amendments will then be presented to City Council for introduction and adoption.

Exhibits:

- A. SBMC Chapter 22.69 Text for Reference
- B. Conceptual Amendments to SFDB Design Review Triggers
- C. Conceptual Amendments to Mailed Noticing Thresholds
- D. SFDB Applicant Survey Report

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Santa Barbara, California Municipal Code

TITLE 22 ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY AND CONSTRUCTION

Chapter 22.69 SINGLE FAMILY DESIGN BOARD

22.69.010 Single Family Design Board.

22.69.015 Definitions.

22.69.020 Neighborhood Preservation - Single Family Residential Unit Design Review.

22.69.030 Alternative Design Review by Historic Landmarks Commission.

22.69.040 Single Family Design Board Notice and Hearing.

22.69.050 Neighborhood Preservation, Grading and Vegetation Removal Ordinance Findings.

22.69.055 Green Building Standard for Large Residences.

22.69.060 Single Family Design Board Referral to Planning Commission for Comments.

22.69.070 Special Design District - Lower Riviera Survey Area (Bungalow District).

22.69.080 Appeals to Planning Commission - Notice and Hearing.

22.69.090 Expiration of Project Design Approvals.

22.69.010 Single Family Design Board.

A. PURPOSE. A Single Family Design Board is hereby created and established by the City to promote the general public welfare, protect and preserve the City's natural and historical charm, and enhance the City's aesthetic appeal and beauty. The goal of the Single Family Design Board shall be to ensure that single-unit residential projects are compatible with the surrounding neighborhood in size and design. The Single Family Design Board is also charged with the task of protecting public visual resources and promoting the ecological sustainability of the City's built environment through the design review process.

B. **MEMBERSHIP.** The Single Family Design Board shall be composed of five members appointed by the City Council. At least one member shall be a licensed architect. Up to three members of the public at large, who reside in the city, may be appointed who do not possess professional qualifications in fields related to architecture. Remaining members shall possess professional qualifications in fields related to architecture or landscape architecture, including, but not limited to, building design, structural engineering, industrial design, urban planning, or landscape contracting. All members of the Board with professional qualifications shall reside within Santa Barbara County and all members shall hold office at the pleasure of the City Council. A person may serve on the Architectural Board of Review or the Historic Landmarks Commission and the Single Family Design Board at the same time.

C. **CONDUCT OF MEETINGS.** The members of the Single Family Design Board shall elect from their own members a chair and vice-chair. The Community Development Director shall act as secretary and record Board actions and render written reports thereof for the Board as required by this chapter. The rules of procedure for the Board shall be established and approved by resolution of the City Council. Three members shall constitute a quorum. (Ord. 6091, 2022; Ord. 5798, 2017; Ord. 5646, 2014; Ord. 5416, 2007)

22.69.015 Definitions.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR. Community Development Director of the City of Santa Barbara, or designee.

DEFINED IN THIS CHAPTER. If any word or phrase is defined in this chapter, the definition given in this chapter shall be operative for the purposes of this chapter.

DEFINED IN THE MUNICIPAL CODE. If a word or phrase used in this chapter is not defined in this chapter, but is defined in Chapter 28.04 (for properties in the Coastal Zone), or either Chapter 30.295 or Chapter

30.300 (for properties in the Inland Zones) of this code, the word or phrase shall have the same meaning in this chapter as the meaning specified in the chapter that applies to the zone in which the property is located.

PROJECT DESIGN APPROVAL. The review and approval of an application filed pursuant to this chapter where the minutes of the Single Family Design Board identify the approval as "Project Design Approval." For the purposes of the State Permit Streamlining Act ([Government Code](#) Section 65950 et seq.), the Project Design Approval is the substantive approval of the project on its design merits.

UNDEFINED WORDS AND PHRASES. Any words or phrases used in this chapter that are not defined in this chapter, Chapter 28.04 (for properties in the Coastal Zone), or either Chapter 30.295 or Chapter 30.300 (for properties in the Inland Zones) of this code shall be construed according to the common meaning of the words and the context of their usage. (Ord. 6009, 2021; Ord. 5798, 2017; Ord. 5537, 2010; Ord. 5416, 2007)

22.69.020 Neighborhood Preservation - Single Family Residential Unit Design Review.

A. APPROVAL REQUIRED BEFORE ISSUANCE OF PERMIT. No building permit, grading permit, vegetation removal permit, or subdivision grading plan, the application for which is subject to the review of the Single Family Design Board pursuant to this chapter, shall be issued without the approval of the Board or the City Council, on appeal.

B. BUILDING PERMITS - SPECIAL DESIGN DISTRICTS.

1. Mission Area Special Design District and Lower Riviera Survey Area - Bungalow District. Applications for building permits to construct, alter, or add to the exterior of a single-unit residence or a related accessory structure on a lot or lots within the Mission Area Special Design District or the Lower Riviera Survey Area - Bungalow District identified in Section 22.68.060 shall be referred to the Single Family Design Board for design review in accordance with the requirements of this chapter and the approved Single Family Design Board Guidelines.

2. Hillside Design District. Applications for building permits to construct, alter, or add to the exterior of any lot developed with either a single-unit residence, or a single-unit residence in combination with an Additional Dwelling Unit (Section 28.93.030.E), an Additional Residential Unit (Section 30.295.020.B.2), or an accessory structure on a lot or lots within the Hillside Design District identified in Section 22.68.060 shall be referred to the Single Family Design Board for design review in accordance with the requirements of this chapter and the approved Single Family Design Board Guidelines if either:

- a. The average slope of the lot or the building site is 20% or more as calculated pursuant to Section 28.15.080 or 30.15.030 of this code; or
- b. The application involves the replacement of an existing roof covering with a roof covering of different materials or colors.

C. BUILDING PERMITS - SINGLE-UNIT RESIDENTIAL AND ADDITIONAL RESIDENTIAL UNITS.

Applications for building permits to construct, alter, or add to the exterior of any lot developed with either a single-unit residence, or a single-unit residence in combination with an Additional Dwelling Unit (Section 28.93.030.E), an Additional Residential Unit (Section 30.295.020.B.2), or an accessory structure on any lot shall be referred to the Single Family Design Board for design review in accordance with the requirements of this chapter and the Single Family Design Board Guidelines if the project for which the building permit is sought involves any of the following:

1. The construction of a new building or structure where any portion of the proposed construction is either: (a) two or more stories tall, or (b) 17 feet or taller in building height (for purposes of this paragraph 1, building height shall be measured from natural grade or finished grade, whichever is lower), or
2. An alteration to an existing building or structure where any portion of the proposed alteration either: (a) alters the second or higher story of the building or structure, or (b) alters a point on the existing building or structure that is 17 feet or higher in building height (for purposes of this paragraph 2, building height shall be measured from natural grade or finished grade, whichever is lower), or

3. An addition to an existing building or structure where any part of the proposed addition is either: (a) two or more stories tall, or (b) 17 feet or taller in building height (for purposes of this paragraph 3, building height shall be measured from natural grade or finished grade, whichever is lower), or
 4. The net floor area of all floors of all existing and new buildings on the lot will exceed 4,000 square feet as calculated pursuant to Section 28.15.083 or 30.20.030.A. of this code, or
 5. The project requires a net floor area modification pursuant to Section 28.92.110.A.6 or 30.250.020.E of this code, or
 6. The construction, alteration, or addition of a deck on the second or higher floor (including roof decks) or a balcony on the second or higher floor of any building that will extend perpendicularly more than three feet from the adjacent exterior wall or will be more than seven feet in length in the dimension parallel to the adjacent exterior wall, or
 7. The construction, alteration, or addition of a retaining wall that is six feet or greater in height, or
 8. The construction, alteration, or addition of a wall, fence or gate in the front yard of the lot that is greater than three and one half feet in height, excluding walls, fences, or gates that are constructed along the interior lot lines of the lot, shall be referred to the Single Family Design Board for a review of the proposed wall, fence or gate, or
 9. The installation of a manufactured home, mobile home or factory-built home (as those terms are defined in the California [Health and Safety Code](#)), subject to the limitations on review specified in [Government Code](#) section 65852.3 et seq., or
 10. The installation of a single-unit residence that was, as a whole or in part, previously located on another lot, or
 11. Grading outside the footprint of the main building on the lot that exceeds either: (i) 50 cubic yards on a lot within the Hillside Design District identified in Section 22.68.060, or (ii) 250 cubic yards on a lot that is not within the Hillside Design District. For purposes of this paragraph 11, soil located within five feet of an exterior wall of a main building that is excavated and recompacted shall not be included in the calculation of the volume of grading outside the main building footprint, or
 12. Projects involving an application for an exception to the covered parking requirements as specified in Section 28.90.100.G.1.c. or 30.175.030.N.1.a.ii. of this code.
 13. Any new buildings, additions, or exterior alterations to existing buildings, resulting in either: (a) detached accessory buildings greater than 500 square feet, or (b) buildings, or portions of buildings, providing covered parking, resulting in three or more covered parking spaces on the lot.
- D. SUBDIVISION GRADING PLANS. All subdivision grading plans involving grading on a lot or lots located in any of the One Family Residence Zones (Chapter 28.15) or Single-Unit Residential Zones (Chapter 30.20) of this code shall be referred to the Single Family Design Board for a review of the proposed grading.

E. GRADING PERMITS. Applications for grading permits that propose grading on a vacant lot or lots located within a One-Family Residence Zones (Chapter 28.15) or Single-Unit Residential Zones (Chapter 30.20) of this code or on any lot that is developed with a single-unit residence, or a single-unit residence in combination with either an Additional Dwelling Unit (Section 28.93.030.E), an Additional Residential Unit (Section 30.295.020.B.2) or accessory buildings, and which are not submitted in connection with an application for a building permit for the construction or alteration of a building or structure on the same lot or lots, shall be referred to the Single Family Design Board for a review of the proposed grading.

F. VEGETATION REMOVAL PERMITS. Applications for vegetation removal permits pursuant to Chapter 22.10 of this title on a lot or lots located within a One-Family Residence Zone (Chapter 28.15) or a Single-Unit Residential Zone (Chapter 30.20), or on any lot that is developed with single-unit residence, or a single-unit residence in combination with an Additional Dwelling Unit (Section 28.93.030.E), an Additional Residential Unit (Section 30.295.020.B.2), or accessory buildings, shall be referred to the Single Family Design Board for a review of the proposed vegetation removal.

G. RETAINING WALLS. The following types of retaining wall improvements, if located on a lot or lots within a One-Family Residence Zone (Chapter 28.15) or a Single-Unit Residential Zone (Chapter 30.20), or on any lot that is developed with a single-unit residence, or a single-unit residence in combination with an Additional Dwelling Unit (Section 28.93.030.E), an Additional Residential Unit (Section 30.295.020.B.2), or accessory buildings shall be referred to the Single Family Design Board for design review of the proposed retaining walls in accordance with the requirements of this chapter and the approved Single Family Design Board Guidelines:

1. The construction of a retaining wall on a lot or a building site with an average slope of 15% or more (as calculated pursuant to Section 28.15.080 or 30.15.030 of this code), or
2. The construction of a retaining wall on a lot that is adjacent to or contains an ocean bluff, or
3. The construction of multiple terracing retaining walls that are not separated by a building or a horizontal distance of more than 10 feet where the combined height of the walls exceeds six feet.

H. SUBSTANTIAL ALTERATIONS TO APPROVED LANDSCAPE PLANS. The Single Family Design Board shall review any substantial alteration or deviation from the design, character, plant coverage at maturity, or other improvements specified on an approved landscape plan for any lot within the City of Santa Barbara that is developed with a single-unit residence where the conditions of approval for the development on the lot require the installation and maintenance of trees or landscaping in accordance with an approved landscape plan, whether or not such alteration or deviation to the landscape plan is proposed in connection with an alteration to a building or structure on the lot that is subject to design review by the Single Family Design Board. Whether a proposed alteration or deviation is substantial shall be determined in accordance with the Single Family Design Guidelines.

I. MINOR ZONING EXCEPTIONS. The Single Family Design Board shall review applications for a Minor Zoning Exception whenever it is allowed by Title 30, on any lot that is developed with a single-unit residence or a single-unit residence in combination with Additional Residential Unit (Section 30.295.020.B.2), subject to the criteria and findings in Title 30.

J. SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS. Applications for review by the Single Family Design Board shall be made in writing in such form as is approved by the Director of Community Development. No application shall be considered complete unless accompanied by the application fee in the amount established by resolution of the City Council.

K. ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVAL. Minor design alterations, as specified in the Single Family Design Guidelines or the Single Family Design Board Guidelines approved by a resolution of the City Council, may be approved as a ministerial action by the Community Development Director without review by the Single Family Design Board. The Community Development Director shall have the authority and discretion to refer any minor design alteration to the Single Family Design Board if, in the opinion of the Community Development Director, the alteration has the potential to have an adverse effect on the architectural or landscape integrity of the building, structure or surrounding property.

L. PRESUMPTION REGARDING PRIOR GRADING, TREE REMOVAL, AND CONSTRUCTION. There shall be a presumption that any grading, removal of trees, or construction that occurred on the lot within two years prior to the submittal of an application for a building permit to construct, alter, or add to a single-unit residence, an Additional Dwelling Unit (Section 28.93.030.E), an Additional Residential Unit (Section 30.295.020.B.2) or a related accessory structure was done in anticipation of such application, and said activities will be included in determining whether the project is subject to review by the Single Family Design Board pursuant to this chapter. For purposes of this presumption, if the prior work required a permit from the City, the prior work shall not be considered complete unless a final inspection has occurred or a certificate of occupancy has been issued. An applicant has the burden to rebut this presumption with substantial evidence sufficient to convince the Single Family Design Board that such work was not done in an effort to avoid review of the entirety of the project by the Single Family Design Board.

M. SINGLE FAMILY DESIGN GUIDELINES. The Single Family Design Guidelines adopted by resolution of the City Council shall provide direction and appropriate guidance to decision makers and City staff in connection with applications reviewed pursuant to this chapter. (Ord. 5798, 2017; Ord. 5518, 2010; Ord. 5505, 2009; Ord. 5444, 2008; Ord. 5416, 2007)

22.69.030 Alternative Design Review by Historic Landmarks Commission.

A project shall be referred to the Historic Landmarks Commission for review under Section [30.220.020](#) of this Code if the project is proposed in any of the following locations:

- A. A lot on which a City Landmark or City Structure of Merit is located;
- B. A property on the City's Potential Historic Resources List; or
- C. Any property located within the El Pueblo Viejo Landmark District or another landmark district.

Review by the Historic Landmarks Commission is in lieu of review by the Single Family Design Board under this chapter. (Ord. 6119, 2023; Ord. 5416, 2007)

22.69.040 Single Family Design Board Notice and Hearing.

A. **PROJECTS THAT REQUIRE A NOTICED PUBLIC HEARING.** Single Family Design Board review of the following projects must be preceded by a noticed public hearing:

1. New single-unit residence, Additional Dwelling Unit (Section 28.93.030.E) or Additional Residential Unit (Section 30.295.020.B.2);
2. The addition of over 500 square feet of net floor area to a single-unit residence, an Additional Dwelling Unit (Section 28.93.030.E) or an Additional Residential Unit (Section 30.295.020.B.2);
3. An addition of a new second or higher story to a single-unit residence, an Additional Dwelling Unit (Section 28.93.030.E), an Additional Residential Unit (Section 30.295.020.B.2), or a related accessory structure;
4. An addition of over 150 square feet of net floor area to an existing second or higher story of a single-unit residence, an Additional Dwelling Unit (Section 28.93.030.E), an Additional Residential Unit (Section 30.295.020.B.2), or a related accessory structure;
5. Projects involving an application for a Minor Zoning Exception as specified in Title 30 of this code;
6. Projects involving grading in excess of 250 cubic yards outside the footprint of any main building (soil located within five feet of an exterior wall of a main building that is excavated and recompacted shall not be included in the calculation of the volume of grading outside the building footprint);
7. Projects involving exterior lighting with the apparent potential to create significant glare on neighboring parcels; or
8. Projects involving an application for an exception to the covered parking requirements as specified in Section 28.90.100.G.1.c or 30.175.030.M of this code.

B. **MAILED NOTICE.** Not less than 10 calendar days before the date of the hearing required by subsection A above, the City shall cause written notice of the project hearing to be sent by first class mail to the following persons: (1) the applicant, and (2) the current record owner (as shown on the latest equalized assessment roll) of any lot, or any portion of a lot, which is located not more than 300 feet from the exterior boundaries of the lot which is the subject of the action. The written notice shall advise the recipient of the following: (1) the date, time and location of the hearing, (2) the right of the recipient to appear at the hearing and to be heard by the Single Family Design Board, (3) the location of the subject property, and (4) the nature of the application subject to design review.

C. **ADDITIONAL NOTICING METHODS.** In addition to the required mailed notice specified in subsection B above, the City may also require notice of the hearing to be provided by the applicant in any other manner that the City deems necessary or desirable, including, but not limited to, posted notice on the project site and notice delivered to non-owner residents of any of the 10 lots closest to the lot which is the subject of the action. However, the failure of any person or entity to receive notice given pursuant to such additional noticing methods shall not constitute grounds for any court to invalidate the actions of the City for which the notice was given.

D. PROJECTS REQUIRING DECISIONS BY THE CITY COUNCIL, PLANNING COMMISSION, OR STAFF HEARING OFFICER. Whenever a project requires another land use decision or approval by the City Council, the Planning Commission, or the Staff Hearing Officer, the mailed notice of the first hearing before the Single Family Design Board shall comply with the notice requirements of this section or the notice requirements applicable to the other land use decision or approval, whichever are greater. However, nothing in this section shall require either: (1) notice of any hearing before the Single Family Design Board to be published in a newspaper; or (2) mailed notice of hearings before the Single Family Design Board after the first hearing conducted by the Single Family Design Board, except as otherwise provided in the Single Family Design Board Guidelines adopted by resolution of the City Council. (Ord. 5798, 2017; Ord. 5518, 2010; Ord. 5444, 2008; Ord. 5416, 2007)

22.69.050 Neighborhood Preservation, Grading and Vegetation Removal Ordinance Findings.

If a project is referred to the Single Family Design Board for review pursuant to Section 22.69.020 and the Single Family Design Board Guidelines, the Single Family Design Board shall make the findings specified below prior to approving the project.

A. NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION FINDINGS. Prior to approval of any project, the Single Family Design Board shall make each of the following findings:

1. Consistency and Appearance. The proposed development is consistent with the scenic character of the City and will enhance the appearance of the neighborhood.
2. Compatibility. The proposed development is compatible with the neighborhood, and its size, bulk, and scale are appropriate to the site and neighborhood.
3. Quality Architecture and Materials. The proposed buildings and structures are designed with quality architectural details. The proposed materials and colors maintain the natural appearance of the ridgeline or hillside.
4. Trees. The proposed project does not include the removal of or significantly impact any designated Specimen Tree, Historic Tree or Landmark Tree. The proposed project, to the maximum extent feasible, preserves and protects healthy, non-invasive trees with a trunk diameter of four inches or more measured four feet above natural grade. If the project includes the removal of any healthy, non-invasive tree with a diameter of four inches or more measured four feet above natural grade, the project includes a plan to mitigate the impact of such removal by planting replacement trees in accordance with applicable tree replacement ratios.
5. Health, Safety, and Welfare. The public health, safety, and welfare are appropriately protected and preserved.
6. Good Neighbor Guidelines. The project generally complies with the Good Neighbor Guidelines regarding privacy, landscaping, noise and lighting.
7. Public Views. The development, including proposed structures and grading, preserves significant public scenic views of and from the hillside.

B. HILLSIDE DESIGN DISTRICT AND SLOPED LOT FINDINGS. In addition to the findings specified in subsection A above, prior to approval of any project on a lot within the Hillside Design District described in Section 22.68.060 or on a lot or a building site that has an average slope of 15% or more (as calculated pursuant to Section 28.15.080 or 30.15.030 of this code), the Single Family Design Board shall make each of the following findings:

1. Natural Topography Protection. The development, including the proposed structures and grading, is appropriate to the site, is designed to avoid visible scarring, and does not significantly modify the natural topography of the site or the natural appearance of any ridgeline or hillside.
2. Building Scale. The development maintains a scale and form that blends with the hillside by minimizing the visual appearance of structures and the overall height of structures.

C. GRADING FINDINGS. In addition to any other applicable findings specified in this section, prior to approval of any project that requires design review under Section 22.69.030 of this chapter, the Single Family Design Board shall make each of the following findings:

1. The proposed grading will not significantly increase siltation in or decrease the water quality of streams, drainages or water storage facilities to which the property drains; and
2. The proposed grading will not cause a substantial loss of southern oak woodland habitat.

D. VEGETATION REMOVAL FINDINGS. In addition to any other applicable findings specified in this section, prior to approving a vegetation removal permit that requires design review under Section 22.69.030 of this chapter, the Single Family Design Board shall make each of the following findings:

1. The proposed vegetation removal will not significantly increase siltation in or decrease the water quality of streams, drainages or water storage facilities to which the property drains; and
2. The proposed vegetation removal will not cause a substantial loss of southern oak woodland habitat; and
3. The proposed vegetation removal will comply with all applicable provisions of Chapter 22.10, "Vegetation Removal," of this code. (Ord. 5798, 2017; Ord. 5444, 2008; Ord. 5416, 2007)

22.69.055 Green Building Standard for Large Residences.

If a project proposes more than 500 square feet of new net floor area (new construction, replacement construction, or additions), and the net floor area of all existing and new buildings on the lot resulting from the application will exceed 4,000 square feet of net floor area as calculated pursuant to Chapter 28.04, all new square footage (new construction, replacement construction, or additions) proposed as part of the project shall meet or exceed a three-star designation under the Santa Barbara Contractors' Association Built Green program or equivalent standards under another green construction program recognized by the City. (Ord. 5518, 2010)

22.69.060 Single Family Design Board Referral to Planning Commission for Comments.

A. **PLANNING COMMISSION COMMENTS.** When the Single Family Design Board determines that a project is proposed for a site which is highly visible to the public, the Board may, prior to granting preliminary approval of the application, require presentation of the application to the Planning Commission solely for the purpose of obtaining comments from the Commission regarding the application for use by the Single Family Design Board in its deliberations.

B. **NOTICE AND HEARING.** Prior to making any comments regarding an application pursuant to this section, the Planning Commission shall hold a noticed public hearing. Notice of the hearing shall be provided in accordance with the requirements of Section [22.69.040](#). (Ord. 5416, 2007)

22.69.070 Special Design District - Lower Riviera Survey Area (Bungalow District).

A. **SPECIAL DESIGN DISTRICT AREA MAP - LOWER RIVIERA SURVEY AREA - BUNGALOW DISTRICT.** Applications for building permits to construct, alter, or add to single-unit residential development or related accessory buildings or structures on lots located within the “Lower Riviera Survey Area - Bungalow District” established pursuant to Section [22.68.060](#) shall be subject to design review in accordance with the requirements of this section as follows:

B. **REVIEW OF BUILDING PERMIT APPLICATIONS.** Applications for building permits to construct, alter, or add to single-unit residential development on lots located within the Bungalow District shall be referred to the Community Development Director for review to determine if the application constitutes a project to demolish the structure. For the purposes of this section, a “demolition” shall be as defined in Section [30.300.080](#). Such a determination shall be made by the Community Development Director in writing within 30 days of the date of the original permit application. If the Community Development Director determines that the property is eligible for listing on the City’s Potential Historic Resources list, the application shall be referred to the Historic Landmarks Commission for determination of the historical significance of the buildings or structures pursuant to Section [30.157.110](#). If it is determined that the property is not eligible for listing on the City’s Potential Historic Resources list, and the Community Development Director determines that the application does constitute an application to demolish the structure, such application shall be referred to the City’s Single Family Design Board for review by the Board in accordance with the requirements of this section. If the Community Development Director determines that the application does not constitute a demolition under the terms of this section, the building permit shall be issued upon compliance with the otherwise applicable requirements of this code for appropriate and required design and development review.

C. **REVIEW OF BUNGALOW DISTRICT DEMOLITION APPLICATIONS BY THE SINGLE FAMILY DESIGN BOARD.** An application referred to the Single Family Design Board pursuant to subsection B above shall be reviewed by the Board in accordance with the hearing, noticing, and appeal procedures established in Sections [22.69.040](#) and [22.69.080](#). An application referred to the Single Family Design Board pursuant to subsection B above shall not be approved unless the Single Family Design Board makes all of the following findings with respect to that application:

1. That the demolition will not result in the loss of a structure containing a primary feature or features of Bungalow or Arts and Crafts style residential architecture, which features are worthy of or appropriate for historical preservation;
2. That the demolition will not result in the loss of a structure which, although not eligible as a City Historic Resource, is a prime example of the Bungalow or Arts and Crafts style residential building appropriate for historical preservation;
3. That the demolition will not result in the loss of a structure which is prominent or which is a prime example of the Bungalow or Arts and Crafts style residential architecture for which this neighborhood is characterized or known.

D. SINGLE FAMILY DESIGN BOARD CONDITIONAL APPROVAL OF DEMOLITION WITHIN THE BUNGALOW DISTRICT.

1. Notwithstanding the above-stated requirement for appropriate demolition findings, the Single Family Design Board may approve a demolition application within the Bungalow District if the Board conditions the demolition permit such that any proposed future development of the real property upon which the structure or structures are located must comply with express conditions of approval designed to preserve certain existing architectural features or buildings, as determined appropriate by the Board.
2. Such conditions may provide that any future development of the property involved must either incorporate the existing structures, in whole or in part, into the new development, or it must preserve certain features or aspects of the existing structures or of the site such that these features are incorporated into any future development of the real property, either through the preservation of the building or feature or its replication in the new development, as may be determined appropriate by the Board.
3. Such conditions of approval shall be prepared in written format acceptable to the Community Development Director and the City Attorney and shall be recorded in the official records of Santa Barbara County with respect to the involved real property prior to issuance of any building permit for said demolition such that these conditions shall be binding on all future owners of the real property as conditions imposed on any new development for a period of 20 years after the conditional approval of the original demolition application and the completion of the demolition.

E. REVIEW OF NEW DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE BUNGALOW DISTRICT BY SINGLE FAMILY DESIGN BOARD. Applications for building permits to construct new single-unit residential development on lots located within the Bungalow District shall be referred to the Single Family Design Board for development plan review and approval in accordance with the public hearing, noticing and appeal requirements of Sections [22.69.040](#) and [22.69.080](#).

F. BUNGALOW DISTRICT FINDINGS. The Single Family Design Board shall not approve a new single-unit residential development within the Bungalow District unless it makes both of the following findings:

1. Express conditions of approval have been imposed on the proposed development which appropriately incorporate the existing structures or architectural features or other aspects of these structures (or of the site involved) into the new development, or these structures, features or aspects will be appropriately replicated in the new development; and
2. The proposed development will not substantially diminish the unique architectural style and character of the Bungalow District as a residential neighborhood of the City.

G. GUIDELINES FOR SPECIAL DESIGN DISTRICT. The Lower Riviera Special Design District Guidelines adopted by resolution of the City Council shall provide direction and appropriate guidance to the decision makers and City staff in connection with the review of applications filed pursuant to this section. (Ord. 5798, 2017; Ord. 5416, 2007)

22.69.080 Appeals to Planning Commission - Notice and Hearing.

A. PROCEDURE FOR APPEAL. Any action of the Single Family Design Board to approve, conditionally approve, or deny project design approval or project final approval subject to this chapter shall be appealable to the Planning Commission under the provisions of subsection B of Section 30.205.150 of this Code and subsections B and C of this section. Notwithstanding Section 30.205.150, subsection A.3, and Section 1.30.050 of this Code, the Planning Commission decision on appeal shall be final subject only to judicial review as provided in Section 1.30.020.

B. NOTICE OF APPEAL. Notice of the public hearing before the Planning Commission on an appeal from a decision of the Single Family Design Board made pursuant to this chapter shall be provided in the same manner as notice was provided for the hearing before the Single Family Design Board.

C. PLANNING COMMISSION DECISION - LIMITS ON NEW EVIDENCE. The Planning Commission will decide the appeal in the exercise of its independent judgment based upon the record of the proceedings of the Single Family Design Board. New evidence will not be considered unless the Planning Commission determines by a majority vote at the hearing on the appeal that relevant evidence exists that, in the exercise of reasonable diligence, could not have been produced or was improperly excluded at the hearing before the Single Family Design Board.

D. The Planning Commission decision on the appeal shall be based upon findings required by this chapter and the guidelines adopted pursuant to subsection M of Section 22.69.020. (Ord. 6119, 2023; Ord. 6004, 2021; Ord. 5416, 2007)

22.69.090 Expiration of Project Design Approvals.

A. PROJECT DESIGN APPROVAL.

1. Approval Valid for Three Years. A Project Design Approval issued by the Single Family Design Board or the Planning Commission on appeal shall expire if a building permit for the project is not issued within three years of the final decision approving or conditionally approving the Project Design Approval.

2. Extension of Project Design Approval. Upon a written request from the applicant submitted prior to the expiration of the Project Design Approval, the Community Development Director may grant one two-year extension of a Project Design Approval.

B. EXCLUSIONS OF TIME. The time period specified in this chapter for the validity of a Project Design Approval shall not include any period of time during which either of the following applies:

1. A City moratorium ordinance on the issuance of building permits is in effect; or
2. A lawsuit challenging the validity of the project's approval by the City is pending in a court of competent jurisdiction. (Ord. 6119, 2023; Ord. 5537, 2010; Ord. 5518, 2010; Ord. 5416, 2007)

Contact:

City Clerk: 805-564-5309

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Please note that the current design review triggers listed below have been summarized for clarity and brevity. See SBMC Section 22.69.020 in Exhibit A for the full text of the current design review triggers. For each design review trigger listed below, staff provide the approximate reduction in the number of projects triggered after proposed code amendments. The change in project numbers will account for an even greater reduction in the number of agenda items scheduled for public hearing. Consent-level projects average 1.6 hearings for approval and Full Board projects average 2.4 hearings. Staff anticipate the changes will lead to a significant reduction of time required of SFDB members and staff at a public hearing.

A. Hillside Design District

Current Triggers:

Exterior changes to a single-unit residence or site within the Hillside Design District when any one of the following apply:

- a. Slope of the lot, or site, is 20% or more (SBMC 22.69.020.B.2.a);
- b. Replacement of a roof covering with different materials or colors is proposed (SBMC 22.69.020.B.2.b);
- c. Grading outside the main building footprint is more than 50 cubic yards (SBMC 22.69.020.C.11).

Proposed Triggers:

On lots in the Hillside Design District with a slope over 20 percent:

- a. Construction of a new main building;
- b. Construction of a new accessory building greater than 250 square feet;
- c. Addition of more than 250 square feet to an existing main or accessory building;
- d. Major alteration¹ to existing main or accessory buildings.

Discussion:

Currently, all alterations, additions, and new buildings in the Hillside Design District on lots over 20 percent slope require SFDB design review. The Hillside Design District (HDD) and 20% slope design review trigger is the most frequently used of all the triggers and accounts for half of all SFDB projects submitted between 2019 and 2022 (227 projects). Of those projects, almost half were “alterations-only” projects with no change in building square footage. Very few of the HDD alterations-only projects were subject to review by the Full Board, with the majority of alterations reviewed on the SFDB Consent Calendar. Staff considers alterations-only projects in the Hillside Design District to be the largest opportunity for reducing the SFDB’s project load at a public hearing and staff time for processing. By eliminating SFDB design review for minor alterations such as window replacements, reroofs, and minor site work, the number of alterations-only projects can be reduced by approximately half. By

¹ Working Definition of Major Alteration: Any physical modification to a structure or site that involves a major portion of the structure or has a substantial visual impact on the structure or its surroundings, as determined by the Community Development Director. Examples of major alterations include but are not limited to: changes to building massing, cladding the exterior walls in a new material, or extensive replacement of windows and doors resulting in a new, modified, or disparate architectural style in a structure.

eliminating design review triggers for minor alterations, the remaining alterations triggers as proposed would be for major alterations, some of which could still be approved administratively.

Under Current Code	After Proposed Code Amendments
~75 Projects Triggered Per Year (Avg.)	~31 Projects Triggered Per Year (Avg.)

B. Special Design Districts

Current Triggers:

Exterior changes to a single-unit residence within the Mission Area Special Design District or the Lower Riviera Survey Area (SBMC 22.69.020.B.1).

Proposed Triggers:

Proposing to eliminate triggers for the Mission Area Design District and the Lower Riviera Special Design District. Projects within these special design districts have been replaced with other design review triggers based on project scope such as second-story additions, major alterations, and new construction.

Discussion:

In contrast to the Hillside Design District, the Mission Area Design District triggered only 8 projects for SFDB review between 2019 and 2022, and the Lower Riviera Special Design District triggered zero projects for SFDB review. The Mission Area Design District, which is mapped as a 1,000-foot overlay radiating from the Santa Barbara Mission, was initially created to provide additional design review protections in the area near the Mission. However, there are no specific design guidelines for this district and subsequent historic resource surveys and existing historic district overlays such as El Pueblo Viejo II provide sufficient design review protection for the area. The Lower Riviera Special Design District has its own design guidelines, however, subsequent survey work has identified contributing resources to the potential Bungalow Haven District and added them to the historic resources inventory, which is automatically under the Historic Landmarks Commission’s purview.

Staff are interested in removing the Mission Area and Lower Riviera Special Design Districts as triggers because specific types of development (e.g. second story addition, major alterations to multi-story buildings) will continue to prompt design oversight by SFDB, and historic resources in these areas are already covered.

Under Current Code	After Proposed Code Amendments
~3 Projects Triggered Per Year (Avg.)	0 Projects Triggered Per Year (Avg.)

C. Multi-Story Buildings

Current Triggers:

Alterations or additions to a new or existing structure, or portion of a structure, taller than one-story or taller than 17 feet in height (SBMC 22.69.020.C.1, C.2, & C.3).

Proposed Triggers:

- a. Construction of a new multi-story main or accessory building;
- b. Construction of a new second or higher story on an existing main or accessory building;
- c. Addition of more than 250 square feet to an existing second or higher story on an existing main or accessory building;
- d. Major alterations² to existing multi-story³ main or accessory buildings.

Discussion:

The two or more stories or over 17 feet in height design review trigger is the second most frequently used for SFDB projects, with 108 projects triggered between 2019 and 2022. At present, any sized addition or any alteration occurring on a second or higher story of a single unit residence triggers SFDB review. This includes window replacements, reroofs involving a change in color or material, and dormer additions. The proposed code amendments would eliminate minor alterations to upper stories on single unit residences as a design review trigger. The code amendments would also increase the design review threshold for additions to existing upper stories - now starting at 250 square feet. New second stories on existing one-story buildings and major alterations to existing residences would continue to trigger design review given the potential impacts to neighbors.

Under Current Code	After Proposed Code Amendments
~36 Projects Triggered Per Year (Avg.)	~28 Projects Triggered Per Year (Avg.)

D. Balconies and Elevated Decks

Current Trigger:

The construction, alteration, or addition of a deck or balcony larger than 3 feet x 7 feet on a portion of a building taller than one story or taller than 17 feet in height (SBMC 22.69.020.C.6).

Proposed Trigger:

New or enlarged decks, balconies, or landings larger than 20 square feet on a portion of a building taller than one story or taller than 17 feet in height.

² Examples include changes to roof pitch and style, increases in plate heights, enlarged windows and openings, changes to architectural style that results in a lack of one cohesive style.

³ Working Definition of Multi-Story Building: Any main or accessory building with a story above the first story, or when a building or portion of a building is 17 feet or taller in height.

Exception: Balconies, landings, or decks on a portion of a building taller than one story or taller than 17 feet that are at least 15 feet from any interior lot line and do not exceed 200 square feet are exempt from design review.

Discussion:

Privacy between neighbors is a prevalent issue at SFDB, particularly due to the recent densification of single-unit neighborhoods with accessory dwelling units as well as a trend of homeowners adding second stories to their single-story homes. When a project involves an elevated deck or balcony, it can often lead to contentions between neighbors. As such, the SFDB looks to their existing design guidelines, which note that upper-story decks are best designed when located at least 15 feet from any interior lot line when possible, in order to maintain privacy. The SFDB regularly refers applicants to design decks with the 15-foot setback in mind to be a good neighbor. In instances when an elevated deck or balcony is closer than 15 feet to an interior lot line, the SFDB reviews carefully to ensure that the design incorporates architectural screening elements such as enclosing walls, trellises, or awnings. In addition, they review site conditions, topography, location of nearest development, and existing or proposed landscaping that may mitigate privacy concerns.

The current design review trigger states that any upper story deck needs design review; however, this does not account for decks that are not publicly visible and that are designed and located in consideration of neighbors. To reduce the number of minor deck projects reviewed administratively by staff and at SFDB Consent, a design review exemption is proposed for upper story decks that are located 15 feet from any interior lot line and less than 200 square feet. This gives staff an objective standard to apply to deck projects that meet the SFDB guidelines while ensuring that decks that do not meet the guidelines for privacy get discretionary review by SFDB.

Under Current Code	After Proposed Code Amendments
~5 Projects Triggered Per Year (Avg.)	~3 Projects Triggered Per Year (Avg.)

E. Grading Permits

Current Triggers:

- a. More than 50 cubic yards of grading outside the main building footprint on lots located within the Hillside Design District (SBMC 22.69.020.C.11);
- b. More than 250 cubic yards of grading outside the main building footprint on lots outside of the Hillside Design District (SBMC 22.69.020.C.11);
- c. All subdivision grading plans involving grading on a lot, or lots, located in any single-unit residential zone (SBMC 22.69.020.D);
- d. Grading on a vacant lot or a lot developed with a single unit residence located within a single-unit residential zone that is not submitted in connection with an application for a building permit for the construction or alteration of a building or structure on the same lot (SBMC 22.69.020.E).

Proposed Trigger:

No Change Proposed.

Under Current Code	After Proposed Code Amendments
~1 Project Triggered Per Year (Avg.)	~1 Project Triggered Per Year (Avg.)

F. Retaining Walls

Current Triggers:

- a. Retaining walls six feet or greater in height;
- b. Retaining walls located on a lot adjacent to, or contains, an ocean bluff;
- c. Multiple retaining walls (terracing) are proposed with a combined height of 6 feet and are not separated by either a building or 10 feet of horizontal distance;
- d. Retaining walls are proposed and the slope of the lot or site is 15% or more.

Proposed Triggers:

- a. Retaining walls six feet or greater in height (SBMC 22.69.020.C.7);
- b. Retaining walls four feet or greater in height on a lot that is adjacent to, or contains an ocean bluff (SBMC 22.69.020.G.2);
- c. Multiple retaining walls (terracing) are proposed with a combined height of 6 feet and are not separated by either a building or 10 feet of horizontal distance (SBMC 22.69.020.G.3);
- d. Retaining walls are proposed and the slope of the lot or site is 15% or more (SBMC 22.69.020.G.1).

Discussion:

The only change made to the design review triggers for retaining walls was to clarify that retaining walls 4 feet tall or greater on a coastal bluff need design review. Such a retaining wall would also require a Coastal Development Permit. Since retaining walls citywide have the potential for visual impacts to the neighborhood and hillside, we think the current design review triggers are adequate and do not propose to change them.

Under Current Code	After Proposed Code Amendments
~1 Project Triggered Per Year (Avg.)	~1 Project Triggered Per Year (Avg.)

G. Large Residential Development

Current Trigger:

Any alterations or additions to single unit residence or site when the cumulative floor area of all structures exceeds 4,000 net square feet (SBMC 22.69.020.C.4).

Proposed Trigger:

Additions over 250 square feet to any main or accessory building when the cumulative floor area of all structures exceeds 4,000 net square feet.

Discussion:

A four-thousand square foot residence is large, especially for Santa Barbara. This design review trigger is meant to provide discretionary oversight on projects where the Hillside and Multi-Story triggers do not apply, such as large one-story residences on low-slope lots. By increasing the threshold for design review from any additions or alterations on a 4000 square foot residence to additions larger than 250 feet, we are removing the “alterations-only” projects from this trigger and focusing on overall square footage instead.

Under Current Code	After Proposed Code Amendments
~3 Projects Triggered Per Year (Avg.)	~2 Projects Triggered Per Year (Avg.)

H. Large Accessory Buildings

Current Triggers:

The proposed detached accessory buildings are cumulatively greater than 500 square feet or three or more covered parking spaces are proposed (SBMC 22.69.020.C.13).

Proposed Trigger:

New or expanded detached accessory buildings greater than 800 SF.

Discussion:

Although infrequently used, the current design review trigger is intended to provide discretionary oversight on accessory buildings where the total square footage is larger than a standard 2-car garage and storage shed. Being a cumulative total of 500 square feet of accessory buildings, this is a relatively low threshold, particularly for larger lots. Increasing the threshold for design review to a new or expanded 800 square foot accessory building instead of 500 cumulative square feet narrows the focus of this trigger to projects with a greater potential for neighborhood or privacy impacts.

Under Current Code	After Proposed Code Amendments
~ 1 Project Triggered Per Year (Avg.)	~1 Project Triggered Per Year (Avg.)

I. Manufactured/Factory-Built Homes

Current Trigger:

The installation of a manufactured home, mobile home or factory-built home, as those terms are defined in the California Health and Safety Code (SBMC 22.69.020.C.9).

Proposed Trigger:

No Change.

Under Current Code	After Proposed Code Amendments
~ Project Triggered Per Year (Avg.)	~1 Project Triggered Per Year (Avg.)

J. Vegetation Removal Permits

Current Trigger:

Vegetation Removal Permits pursuant to SBMC Chapter 22.10 (SBMC 22.69.020.F).

Proposed Trigger:

No Change.

Under Current Code	After Proposed Code Amendments
~1 Project Triggered Per Year (Avg.)	~1 Project Triggered Per Year (Avg.)

K. Substantial Alterations to Approved Landscape Plans

Current Trigger:

Substantial alterations to an approved landscape plan (SBMC 22.69.020.H).

Proposed Trigger:

No change.

Under Current Code	After Proposed Code Amendments
~1 Project Triggered Per Year (Avg.)	~1 Project Triggered Per Year (Avg.)

L. Uncovered Parking Spaces

Current Trigger:

Projects proposing an exception to the covered parking requirements as specified in SBMC Section 28.90.100.G.1.c. or 30.175.030.N.1.a.ii⁴ (SBMC 22.69.020.C.12).

Proposed Trigger:

No change.

⁴ SBMC Section 30.175.030.N.1.a.ii:

ii. Two Uncovered Spaces. Any lot developed with less than 80% of the maximum net floor area for the lot, pursuant to Section 30.20.030.A, Maximum Floor Area (Floor to Lot Area Ratio), may provide two uncovered automobile spaces, subject to approval by the appropriate Design Review Body, provided a minimum 200 cubic feet of enclosed exterior storage space is provided on-site.

Discussion:

Although there is no change proposed for this design review trigger, we are proposing to eliminate the requirement for a mailed notice for this project type. This would allow staff to approve the screening (or lack of screening) for uncovered parking spaces administratively rather than require a public hearing every time. Staff would still have the discretion to refer projects with a potential neighborhood impact to SFDB Consent or Full Board. Feedback from public engagement indicated that most requests for uncovered parking provide appropriate screening or are not publicly visible, such that they can be approved administratively rather than require a public hearing.

Under Current Code	After Proposed Code Amendments
~2 Projects Triggered Per Year (Avg.)	~2 Projects Triggered Per Year (Avg.)

M. Cumulative Building and Site Alterations

Current Trigger:

There shall be a presumption that any grading, removal of trees, or construction that occurred on the lot within two years prior to the submittal of an application for a building permit to construct, alter, or add to a single-unit residence, an Additional Dwelling Unit (Section 28.93.030.E), an Additional Residential Unit (Section 30.295.020.B.2) or a related accessory structure was done in anticipation of such application, and said activities will be included in determining whether the project is subject to review by the Single Family Design Board pursuant to this chapter. For purposes of this presumption, if the prior work required a permit from the City, the prior work shall not be considered complete unless a final inspection has occurred or a certificate of occupancy has been issued. An applicant has the burden to rebut this presumption with substantial evidence sufficient to convince the Single Family Design Board that such work was not done in an effort to avoid review of the entirety of the project by the Single Family Design Board (SBMC 22.69.020.L).

Proposed Trigger:

No change except clarifying language edits.

Under Current Code	After Proposed Code Amendments
~1 Project Triggered Per Year (Avg.)	~1 Project Triggered Per Year (Avg.)

Whenever a mailed notice is required for an SFDB project¹, the project is ineligible for administrative approval and is required to be reviewed at a public hearing. Staff’s approach to amending the noticing thresholds was to keep the requirement of a mailed notice for larger projects and eliminate that requirement for smaller projects. The noticing thresholds below were evaluated and edited based on frequency of use, potential project impacts, and stakeholder feedback about what types of projects are most important for the City to inform neighbors about. The noticing thresholds for projects with a larger neighborhood impact (new house, 500 square foot addition, new second story) are proposed to remain unchanged. The noticing thresholds have been increased for additions to existing second stories and for grading outside the main building footprint or on a vacant lot. The noticing thresholds for Minor Zoning Exceptions, exterior lighting with glare potential, and uncovered parking exceptions have been removed. This allows staff the flexibility to approve these minor project types administratively if certain criteria are met, or to refer a project to the SFDB. Courtesy mailed noticing could be initiated at staff’s discretion. See SBMC Section 22.69.040 in Exhibit A for the full text of the current mailed noticing triggers.

Current SFDB Mailed Noticing Thresholds (SBMC 22.69.040)	Proposed SFDB Mailed Noticing Thresholds
New main building	No change
500 square foot addition to building or lot	No change
New second or higher story on an existing building	No change
150 square foot addition to an existing second or higher story	<i>250 square</i> foot addition to an existing second or higher story
250 cubic yards of Grading Outside the Main Building Footprint or on a Vacant Lot	<i>500 Cubic Yards</i> of Grading Outside the Main Building Footprint or on a Vacant Lot
Minor Zoning Exceptions	<i>No Mailed Notice Required</i>
Exterior lighting with glare potential	<i>No Mailed Notice Required</i>
Uncovered parking spaces exception	<i>No Mailed Notice Required</i>

¹ Mailed notice consists of sending notice of the project hearing by first class mail to the applicant and all property owners within 300 feet of the project site, at least 10 calendar days prior to the hearing.

SFDB Survey

SURVEY RESPONSE REPORT

07 February 2023 - 23 February 2023

PROJECT NAME:

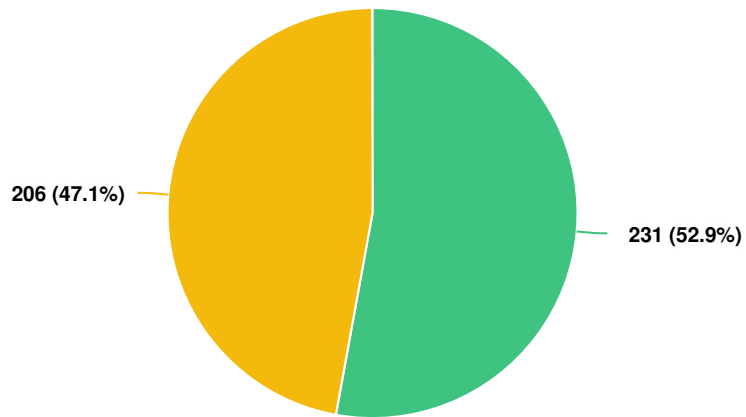
Single Family Design Board (SFDB) Survey





SURVEY QUESTIONS

Q1 | Have you ever had a project before the Single Family Design Board (Consent or Full Board)?

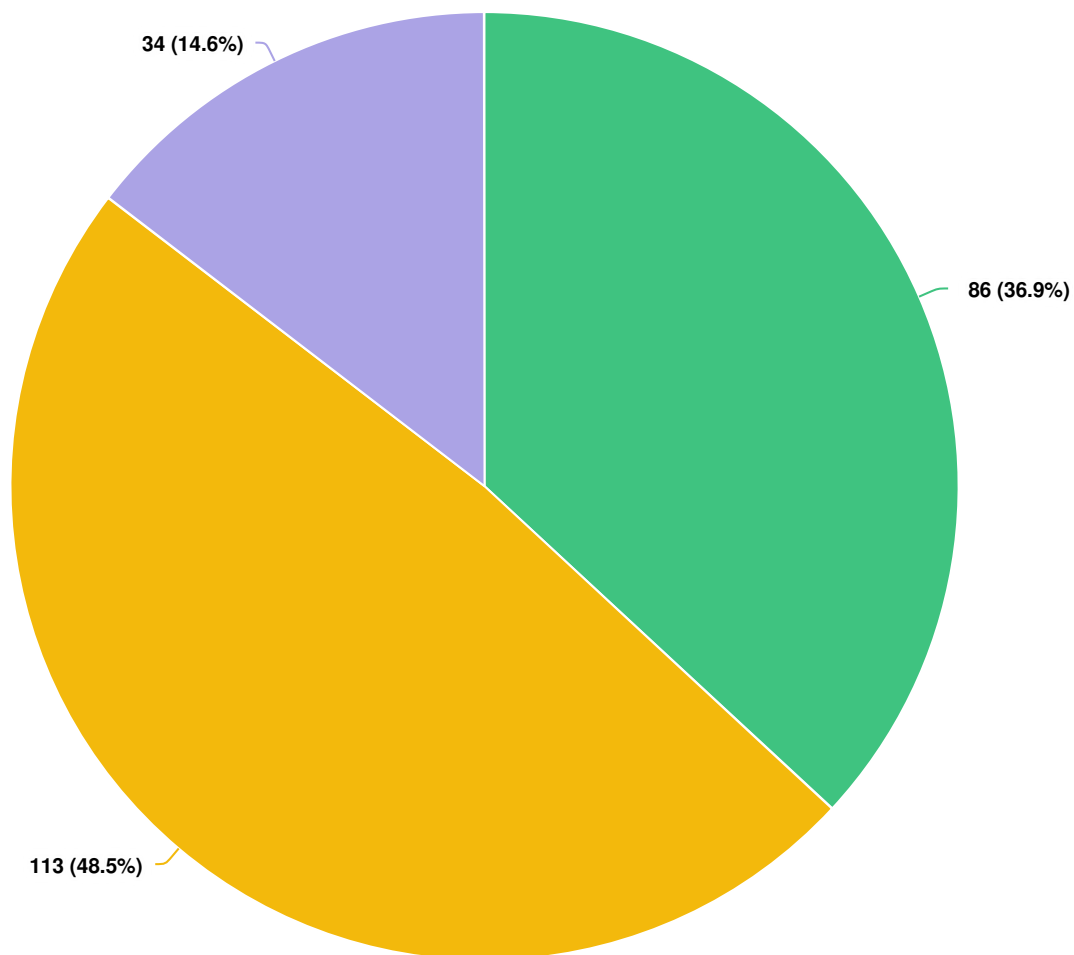


Question options

- Yes
- No

Mandatory Question (436 response(s))
Question type: Radio Button Question

Q2 | Approximately how many projects have you presented to SFDB?

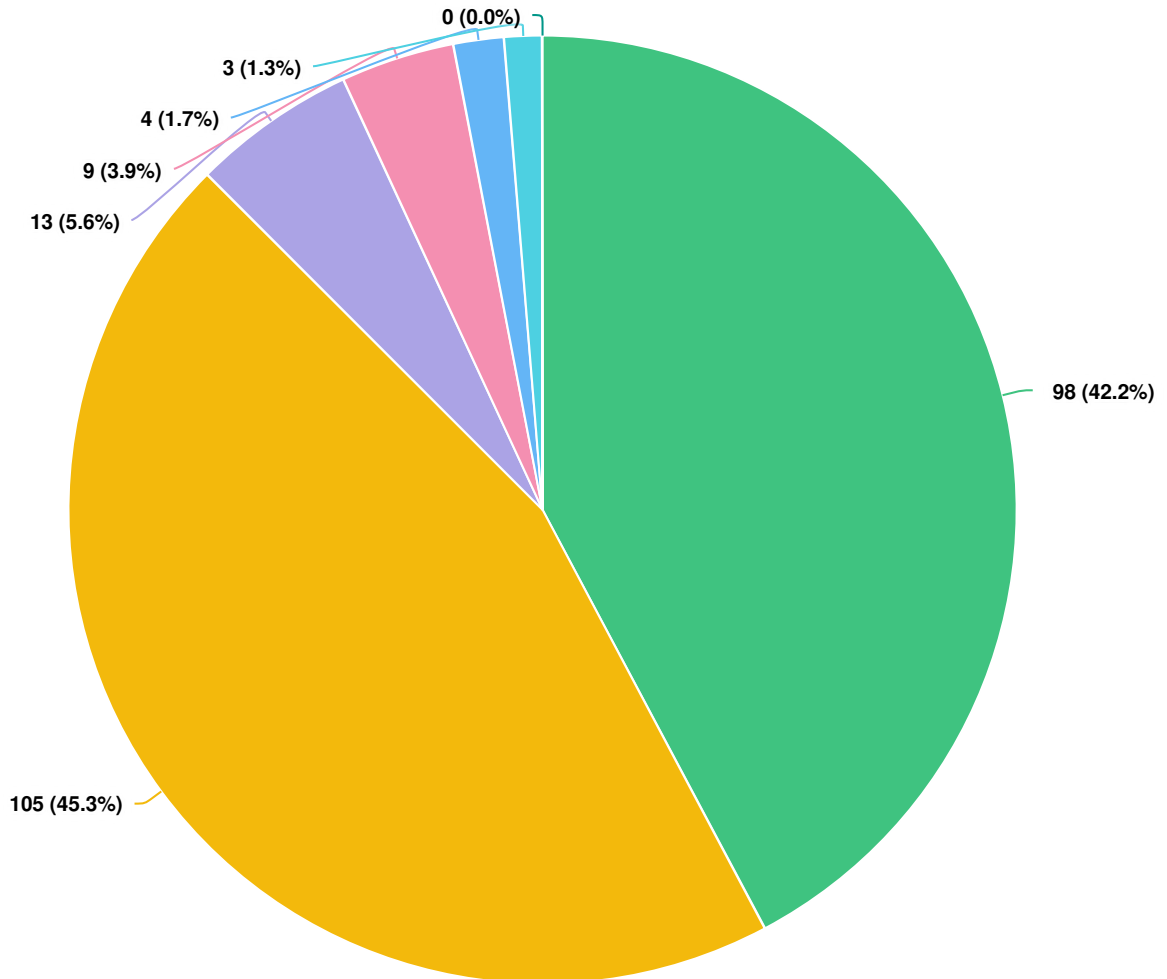


Question options

- 1 project
- 2-10 projects
- 11+ projects

Mandatory Question (232 response(s))
Question type: Radio Button Question

Q3 Which of the following best describes your primary role with respect to SFDB?

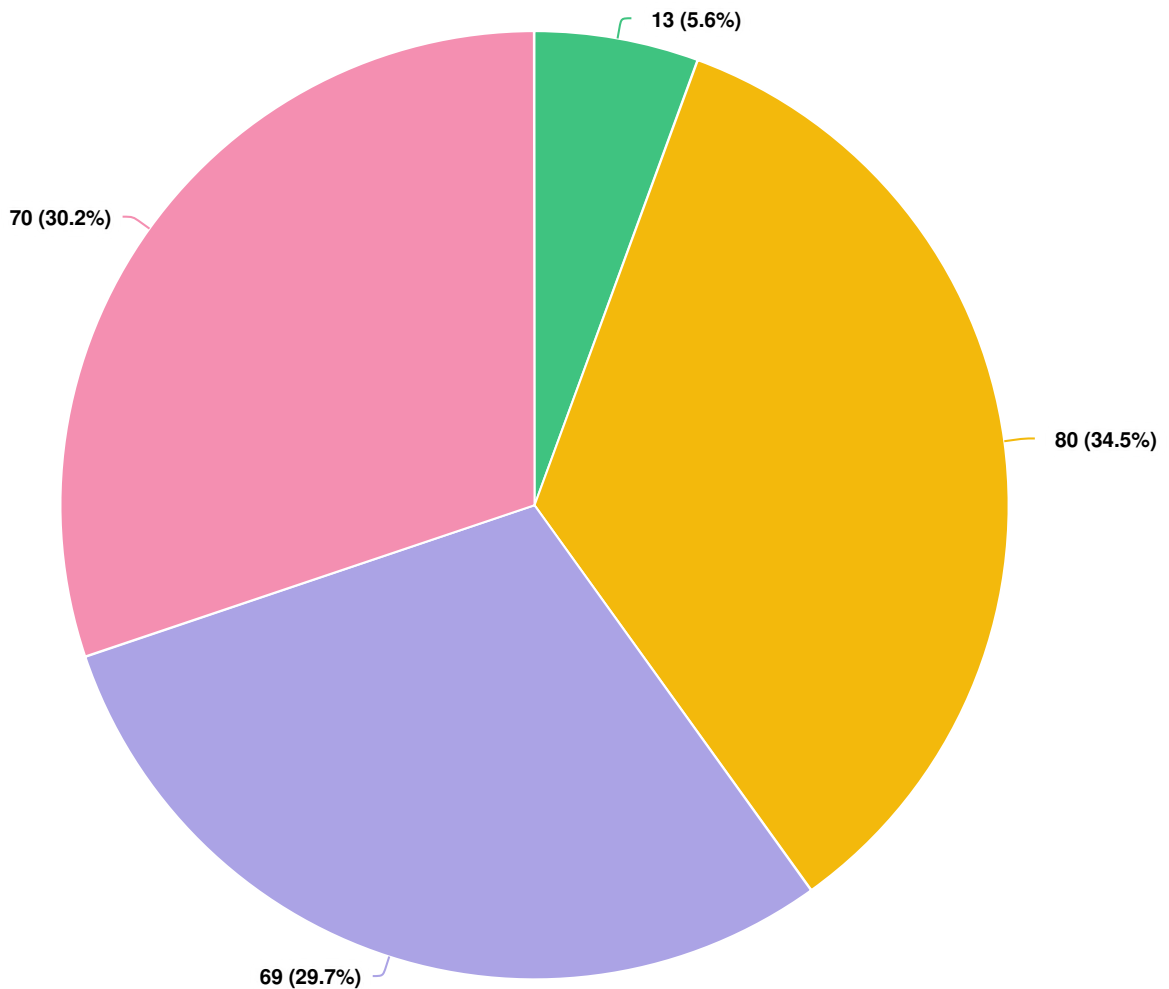


Question options

- Homeowner
- Architect / Design Professional
- Agent for applicant (land use planner, permit expediter)
- Contractor
- Developer
- Other (please specify)
- Realtor / Broker

Mandatory Question (231 response(s))
Question type: Radio Button Question

Q4 In your experience, do you believe the SFDB design review process resulted in a better project design outcome?

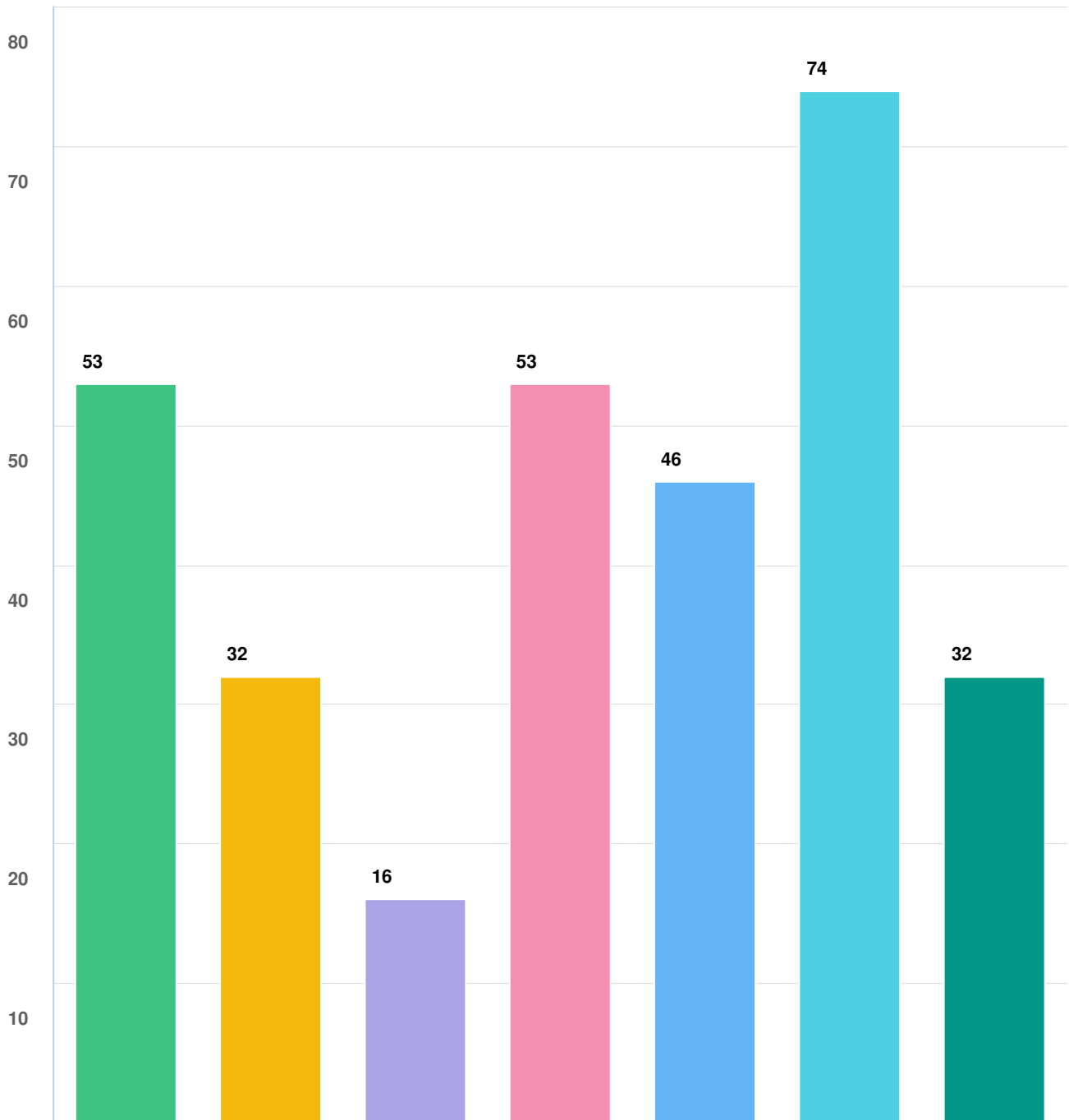


Question options

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

Mandatory Question (231 response(s))
Question type: Radio Button Question

Q5 Please share any types of comments made by SFDB you found helpful. Check all that apply

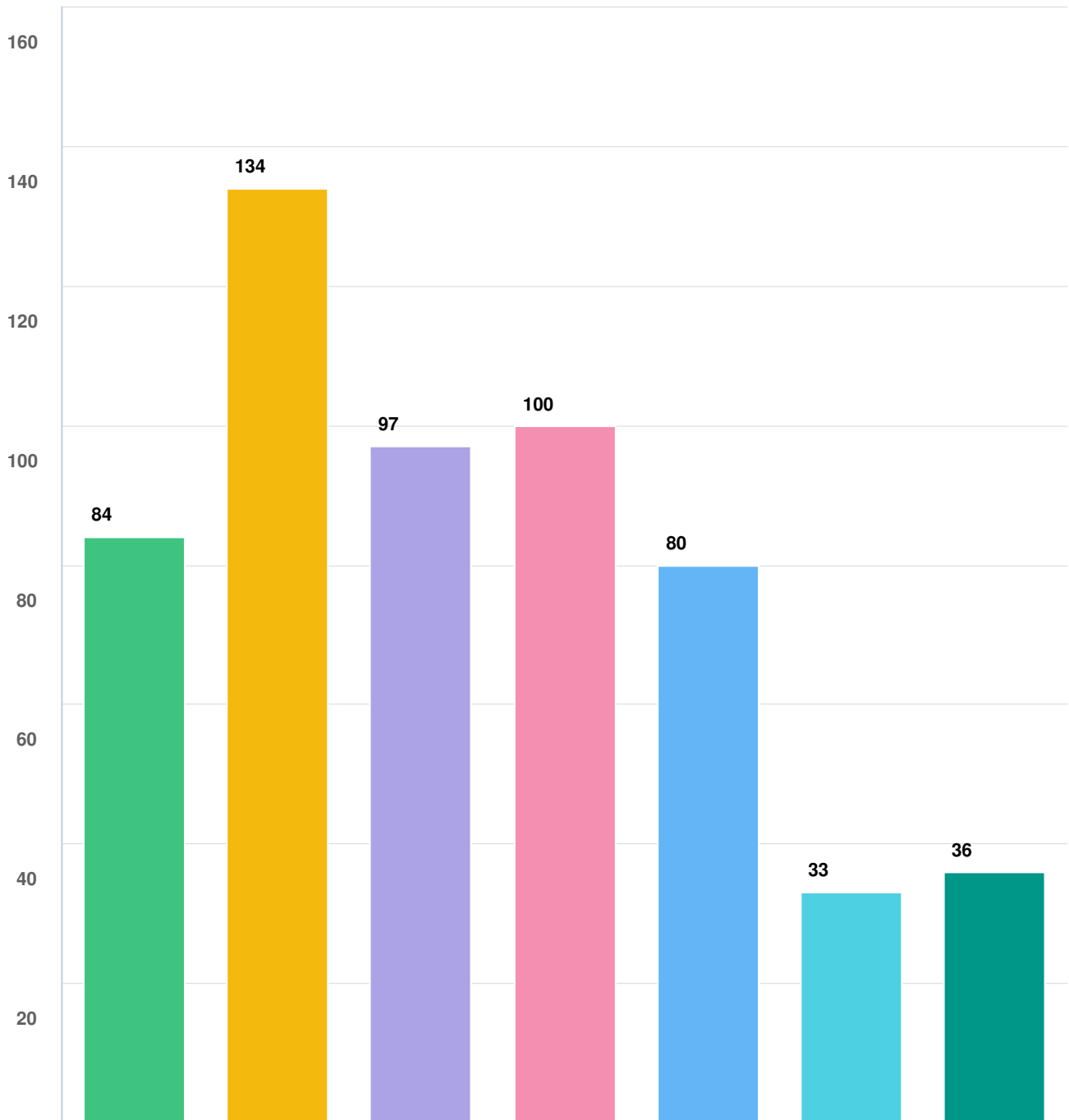


Question options

- Site planning/site considerations
- Architectural style
- Livability/function
- Neighborhood compatibility of style and size
- Project's relationship to immediate neighbor
- No opinion
- Other (please specify)

Optional question (205 response(s), 232 skipped)
Question type: Checkbox Question

Q6 Please share any types of comments made by SFDB you found to be not helpful. Check all that apply



Question options

- Site planning/site considerations
- Architectural style
- Livability/function
- Neighborhood compatibility of style and size
- Project's relationship to immediate neighbor
- No opinion
- Other (please specify)

Optional question (227 response(s), 210 skipped)
Question type: Checkbox Question

Q7 | If you would like to elaborate, please share any other suggestions or comments made by SFDB that were helpful or not so helpful?

Anonymous

2/08/2023 05:18 PM

Rejection of color scheme by Consent, overturned by Full Board

Anonymous

2/08/2023 05:38 PM

I found the SFDB to be thoughtful and diligent in their consideration of our FAR.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 04:39 AM

when an existing house is relatively pedestrian, requiring a homeowner to add more detail or stylistic upgrades to remodel when not proposed by owner/agent as part of program is not helpful but rather upsets owner regarding cost of design and construction

Anonymous

2/09/2023 11:26 AM

Over the years, board members have been biased against architecture styles. In particular MODERN styles. For some reason this board is against Glass Garage doors and Glass Railing. This bias is ridiculous and unfounded and not helpful

Anonymous

2/09/2023 02:27 PM

Making decisions based on personal beliefs rather than what the guidelines state. Overreaching and including comments on areas of a project not visible to the public

Anonymous

2/09/2023 02:21 PM

The entire process was awful - the City sent us to SFDB, then historical review, then said we were not historical, so sent us back to SFDB, all of which took nearly 2 years and tens of thousands of dollars in new plans.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 02:22 PM

neighbors run the show, not the review boards. this is a crapshoot, i tell owners hang on for the ride. also, people making small additions should get a break

Anonymous

2/09/2023 02:46 PM

The format is such that the applicant cannot rebut the comments made. Sometimes the comments do not reflect the questions raised during the Q&A portion of the process and the applicant is left wondering why it wasn't brought up as a concern prior to final

Anonymous

The time it takes to get comments and approvals is long.

2/09/2023 02:45 PM

Anonymous

2/09/2023 02:53 PM

The entire process was frustrating, lengthy and expensive. I was improving a home and the value for the neighborhood yet I was expected to jump through hoops - even as far as deciding years in advance exactly what my landscaping plan would be.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:07 PM

less oversight. provide a hardcopy of clearly defined comments right after the meeting. waiting weeks only hurts the home owners.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 10:33 AM

HELPFUL: building massing, window placement, cohesion with community NOT HELPFUL: going against clients intent when those intentions comply with city req's, requesting 3D modeling/renderings, members should be able to visualize plans or it should be a req

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:11 PM

With so many regulations and red tape, designs are often very limited and seem like an extreme jig saw puzzle to navigate for often simple improvements

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:23 PM

The comments were extremely subjective and did not follow the SB building guidelines.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:25 PM

Horrible experience. Despite living in a high fire zone, they would only permit me to use wood for my railing on a deck. I spent thousands of dollars on an architect fighting them on it to no avail. I will NEVER submit anything again for a permit.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:37 PM

I believe that the purpose of a Design Review Board should be to improve the quality of construction. Especially to see beyond renderings that purport to show a good looking building when in fact the materials and the construction are poor.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:26 PM

Board members have been rude about style selection based on their personal preferences.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:33 PM

Board members have not been helpful in solving complex constraints of client program needs, budget, site constraints, code constraints, and most importantly, they have been a barrier to perceived architectural style.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:42 PM

SFDB should be there to help designers/applicants. They do not. It's nearly impossible to coral architectural opinions just between 2 architects, let alone 5 or 6. Whether they individually 'like' the design is not a standard, but that's The Standard.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:40 PM

My architects said City was very. Difficult to work with

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:45 PM

The SFDB had no substantive comments on our project and yet required us to return for a second review because they insisted we needed to included a colored elevation (despite already having full elevations with a keyed color palette). A waste of time.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:40 PM

Our design was what we chose, the board tried to change the design to what they personally liked. Nothing was code related, just their personal opinions

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:42 PM

SFDB should give all their feedback at once. It is EXTREMELY costly for homeowners and frustrating for builders, having to wait many weeks or months in between meetings and getting additional feedback along the way that drags the process out. Speed needed

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:39 PM

Should not micromanage design

Anonymous

2/09/2023 04:41 PM

They are inconsistent from meeting to meeting, and they get hung up on the smallest things. I wish the board would realize that their decisions/actions/comments have serious cost implications as they effectively drag out projects to longer timelines.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 04:19 PM

The board is so unhelpful, most of the members aren't even architects. They cause so much stress and anxiety and their opinions seem to depend on the day and their mood.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 07:01 PM

Worked on a project with a family for a 2 years, thoughtfully considering impact on neighbors , storm water collection, aesthetic, structural and material improvements, etc. and was insulted by the chair who claimed we hadn't give the project any thought

Anonymous

2/09/2023 09:51 PM

No useful comments were provided. Just delays to simple projects.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 10:10 PM

Projects of this nature should be handled administratively. Property rights of owners held in the balance by unqualified laypeople is morally wrong.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 10:15 PM

Process should be more executive rather than bureaucratic

Anonymous

2/09/2023 10:19 PM

I believe they go to far and the city doesn't have the time or resources. Permitting takes forever and that's why most people don't even bother getting a permit. Should be much faster and easier and less red tape

Anonymous

2/10/2023 03:42 AM

They slowed down the process significantly by not taking the whole house and project into consideration and not visiting the site but making decisions based off of paper files.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 04:36 AM

The comments were very opinion oriented on very minute details that resulted in additional costs with no real gain to the final outcome.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 07:38 AM

A board member made condescending comments that were simply a difference of taste, not of design. The next time the same project was presented (with no changes), that member was absent and all the comments were positive. There was no objectivity, just s

Anonymous

2/10/2023 07:59 AM

Department was difficult to work with overall. Plans were approved, but were too easily interrupted by anonymous neighbor complaints

Anonymous

2/10/2023 08:18 AM

SFDB is fine... But MBAR is WAY TOO OLD and they need term limits.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 08:55 AM

The SFDB prevented our family from realizing our dream home design by insisting on so many arbitrary changes we were left with a generic design with no character. They take your vision and change it to theirs. High on power trip

Anonymous

Generally, they don't understand their purview and they insert their

2/10/2023 09:23 AM

personal agendas and opinions inappropriately. They have been insulting to applicants and property owners. They do not know rules of conduct. Some are not qualified on any level.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 09:17 AM

First time we presented we had a "wainscoat" (bricks) on the outside below the windows. We were told to take it off. At a later design meeting we were told that some brickwork on the facade would look nice. Arbitrary advice and decisions.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 09:16 AM

The SFDB's sanctions on reasonable design and development and associated fees throughout the entire design/permit/build process can only be afforded by wealthy/elite homeowners. Lower income homeowners are hamstrung to try to improve our properties.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 09:25 AM

The SFDB would often levy actions, but often would not make the applicants follow through in correcting the action. For example lighting plans, views to determine privacy, etc. were issued as actions but the projects were approved even without closure.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 09:51 AM

I have found the suggestions to be based on personal bias and sometimes impractical or unrealistic in terms of build-ability and costs.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 09:52 AM

SFDB required a condition to use Santa Barbara Sandstone on a project, where no other development on the street has used Santa Barbara Sandstone

Anonymous

2/10/2023 10:21 AM

We were replacing a balcony railing with a decorative metal railing with panels. The steps we had to take to submit our design to the review board seemed excessive and while the review board liked our design, they proposed things that weren't necessary.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 10:57 AM

Failed to consider HO's budget when providing architectural style comments.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 11:23 AM

SFDB should review size, bulk and scale. Basically they should review a project in the big picture. Sometimes SFDB review turn into a discussion of minute details & personal taste which is not helpful to the client.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 12:50 PM

The design review board has its detractors, but looking at the big picture it serves a very important role in the future development of the city.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 01:16 PM

Archictural inpiut add only cost to the project, without and archtceural improvement or any neighrhood copabilityre imposeded

Anonymous

2/10/2023 02:37 PM

For one meeting they will specify something and then in the next meeting they may change their minds and ask for something else. All of these changes cost thousands of dollars in architects fees. They seem to like wielding their power at our expense

Anonymous

2/10/2023 03:06 PM

The City should strongly reevaluate the need and discretion that a SFDB has over SFR projects. Applicants are not developers and do not have the financial capacity to bear additional costs and delays with unnecessary discretionary review.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 06:29 PM

The board should not subjectively interject their costly revisions that are not legal like "I'd like your roof pitched". A complete change of roof style on their whim cannot be legal.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 07:48 PM

I suggest that they review the designs more closely before insisting on changes.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 06:43 PM

I wanted to replace 1972 Al slider windows with new energy efficient vinyl windows. I was told I could do a counter permit. I could NOT!!! I was told to do a design review. It was a time consuming, expensive, HORRIBLE experience!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Anonymous

2/10/2023 08:04 PM

waiting for two years

Anonymous

2/11/2023 09:32 AM

at least one suggestion made that was extraordinarily detrimental to the historic design of the house. We did NOT follow it, but were appalled that a registered architect could make such a suggestion (slicing off sections of the roof).

Anonymous

2/11/2023 11:39 AM

SFDB is not consistently applying the same standards to projects. Some strongly opinionated Board members sway other more passive Board members, which results in random, not genuinely unified

recommendations, making the process unpredictable and arbitrary

Anonymous

2/11/2023 03:18 PM

Didn't like having to design entire garden before anything existed of the new house. Hardscape, trees> 10ft and commitment to water/irrigation standards better than every single individual plant.

Anonymous

2/11/2023 06:20 PM

Having the house addition plans reviewed by the SFDB felt like I was on trial. They expressed opinions (this window should be square and not rectangular) etc. Their feedback was purely stylistic and frivolous and wasted my time and money to comply

Anonymous

2/12/2023 05:55 AM

SFDB is a waste of city resources and is simply a platform for board members to have their non professional opinions impact projects.

Anonymous

2/12/2023 09:15 AM

One rejection leading to project delay based on landscaping within a private courtyard not visible to public and designed by licensed landscape architect

Anonymous

2/13/2023 10:00 AM

Telling a homeowner that they should have rubbed bronze window frames instead of black is insane. That is one person opinion, why in the world does one persons opinion get to decide what a homeowner does with their house. INSANE!

Anonymous

2/13/2023 10:46 AM

If find the review boards to be just fine overall in their work and review comments and guidance, it is the City internal processes that leave a great deal to be desired an indeed. They create situations where design review should not be necessary.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 10:59 AM

DRB told us how to do our windowsills, trim color, and roofing surface, despite our house not being visible to any but 1 neighbor.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 11:45 AM

We found it amazing that there was negative comments about architectural style that perfectly fits the historical prototype of a Santa Barbara house...beige stucco, red tile roof, and black trim.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 12:11 PM

The process is egregious and riddled with pure personal opinion that doesn't improve results at all - it simply delays projects and costs homowners \$\$\$

Anonymous

2/13/2023 12:39 PM

Some of the comments and direction of the SFDB are extremely personal and do not reflect the standards or design of the neighborhood. The personal "feelings" of the SFDB should never overstep bounds.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 12:51 PM

The vast majority of the comments/suggestions were highly subjective and were not followed up by any recommendations to appease the whims of the board. The board has caused the cost of design for my project to increase substantially.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 01:19 PM

Overall the response from SFDB was excessively negative for our small single story home in a very eclectic and mixed style neighborhood

Anonymous

2/13/2023 01:28 PM

There was no concern for the additional costs and time during the process. While there were lots of changes I'm unconvinced that the process effected anything in a meaningful way, I just spent more money on revising plans.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 02:56 PM

Though our house is a CA Ranch style home built in 1947, like the majority of homes on our street, we were told by the chair that he would prefer that we remodel to make the house a Spanish style.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 05:15 PM

SFDB board members make decisions based on emotions and architectural style biases. They also immediately capitulate to every neighbor concern.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 06:16 PM

I don't think the SFDB should be weighing in on materials (like metal vs. composite roofing), paint colors and stylistic choices.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 10:32 PM

Completely biased opinions for a simple project

Anonymous

2/14/2023 08:54 AM

I feel that many times this board and other seem to project a personal design opinion. The Boards needs to see a project for what it is and recognize when a project is good and when a project needs help. It should not be about a personal design opinion

Anonymous

2/14/2023 09:25 AM

Be more user friendly and positive

Anonymous

2/14/2023 01:22 PM

Q4: Answer should be N/A because the projects were acceptable as is.

Anonymous

2/14/2023 02:21 PM

Each member felt it was their duty to redesign the project

Anonymous

2/14/2023 05:10 PM

City planning ahead of Design Review. Letters explaining proposed project delivered to closest 20 neighbors. Then letters delivered to registered home owners of 20 closest neighbors including site location workshop. Took near a year to get clarity.

Anonymous

2/14/2023 05:01 PM

Too narrow minded board members. This is not THEIR design. It is my design AND what my client wants.

Anonymous

2/15/2023 06:39 AM

We just need our tiny project permitted. We have done everything asked and spent a fortune on the changes your dept has requested. Then the project we spent a fortune changing on your request only to find out need not be changed..

Anonymous

2/15/2023 12:48 PM

Comments seem subjective, not based on ordinance

Anonymous

2/15/2023 02:51 PM

SB9 state law does not allow city officials to be subjective when evaluating whether or not splitting a homeowner lot using SB9 would benefit neighbors, neighborhood, etc. As long as a lot meets SB9's minimum requirements it should not be debateable.

Anonymous

2/15/2023 04:52 PM

I typically have favor with whatever design aesthetic we are presenting. We often get unfair and costly comments when the board is trying to balance neighbor pushback. We always conform to zoning; SFDB becomes a forum for neighbors rights before owners

Anonymous

2/15/2023 03:05 PM

Generally the professionals on SFDB are ok, there have been instances where they assert subjective opinions on style or massing that exceed their authority. The problem is staff's extensive checklists. Conceptual reviews should not have to be so detailed.

Anonymous

2/15/2023 06:22 PM

I find the talk about architecture style not helpful as it distills for a style we up turn our nose at in Santa Barbara and "Livability/function"

is code for will this resell well. Projects should be compatible with the area, not style

Anonymous

2/15/2023 06:35 PM

It is not helpful to get opposite views from Board showing that varying opinions are valid, but being at the mercy of the number of Board members who show up that day. There is inconsistency and no ability to clarify findings after they are made.

Anonymous

2/16/2023 08:02 AM

Disparaging comments about the design or drawings undermine architect/client relations. The duration of the process (minimum 30-business day review by staff, then months of SFDB reviews) is incompatible with the timelines of families needing space.

Anonymous

2/16/2023 09:15 AM

It is not helpful when they focus in small and irrelevant things, such as a gate entry keypad design.

Anonymous

2/16/2023 10:23 AM

Zoning Ordinance provides all the necessary regulations (and more) for SFDB to review.

Anonymous

2/16/2023 12:54 PM

Board repeatedly proclaimed their distaste for the architectural style of the house and exhibited a clear bias based on this.

Anonymous

2/16/2023 03:19 PM

Overall comment is that the SFDB board is often times untrained in what it means to review a project. There are many subjective comments that are not tied back to City of SB Design Regulations. This translates to untrained individuals affecting projects

Anonymous

2/16/2023 07:27 PM

The purpose of SFDB is to avoid unattractive projects that are designed by unqualified professionals. Unfortunately, the board now believes every project needs to be a masterpiece and goes completely overboard on the design requirements.

Anonymous

2/17/2023 03:23 PM

The board has added years onto my project. They infringe upon me building more housing. They basically function as an HOA. Disband it

Anonymous

2/18/2023 05:41 PM

Review board rejected a design change we requested because, in their view, it was not compatible with the neighborhood. The proposed installation is invisible to surrounding neighbors. Moreover, neighboring properties had not been renovated in decades

Anonymous

2/19/2023 10:10 AM

Regarding scale, for the non-architect, asking the plan submitter to simply draw a person inside the interior may not be enough to clarify what the SFDB is thinking.

Anonymous

2/19/2023 09:54 AM

Neighboring comments were very supportive.

Anonymous

2/19/2023 10:29 AM

Have spent thousands extra dollars on reviews because the city-required arborist is unrealistic and the original surveyor botched the job; my proactive attempt to find solution with SFDB results in multiple costly review meetings.

Anonymous

2/19/2023 04:27 PM

insistence on certain historic style when the owner wanted contemporary

Anonymous

2/20/2023 10:35 AM

Their comments have been inconsistent, arbitrary and of personal in nature of crossing boundaries and not taking the high costs of continual resubmittals. The level of stress I have seen to brought to myself and homeowner is very high.

Anonymous

2/20/2023 09:36 AM

There are both good and bad. However the question must be asked, for a 3% improvement in the look of a project is it worth the delay or expense that the SFDB, or any design review adds to the project. Would it be better to just use a check list.

Anonymous

2/20/2023 10:35 AM

Streamline the review process is needed.

Anonymous

2/20/2023 11:27 AM

It's not necessary for materials to match adjacent neighbors - this promotes homogeneity and detracts from neighborhoods/communities.

Anonymous

2/20/2023 12:42 PM

true objective design review by a random group of individuals is simply not possible. there should be no room for a subjective review full of personal biases and preferences. design review comments create "design by committee" solutions..

Anonymous

2/20/2023 12:38 PM

There was a bias against a particular style in both cases a modern aesthetic even though the architecture has a vernacular form and

elements to it that made it very appropriate with its context and fit in to the size, bulk & scale of the context.

Anonymous

2/20/2023 05:22 PM

Several projects were put through the ringer based on compatibility "issues" and neighbor complaints even after we demonstrated it fit with the context and that we had made efforts to alleviate neighbor concerns. Another project was not allowed to modern.

Anonymous

2/20/2023 05:11 PM

Single Family Zoning and Traffic Planning is destroying the city. Re-evaluate setbacks, zoning, and height limits at once.

Anonymous

2/20/2023 10:58 PM

The SFDB repeatedly went beyond their scope by commenting on an already approved ADU. When reminded of this by city staff, they continued to reference it as part of their argument against aspects of the main house. They don't answer to anyone.

Anonymous

2/20/2023 08:35 PM

boardmember suggested that our house was not appropriate for our lifestyle. boardmember suggested it was incompatible with neighborhood but a neighborhood study proved otherwise. boardmember suggested we make changes which increased the cost

Anonymous

2/20/2023 09:02 PM

Limiting the FAR mat be illegal and should be challenged. The subjective nature of the review board leads you to believe that you must do an under the table deal to get through. Discriminates against smaller lots.

Anonymous

2/21/2023 01:04 PM

A project that relates to its surrounding does not mean that it has to look similar or resemble the houses around it. As long as it adds value and improves the architectural dialog within the city it should not be an issue.

Anonymous

2/21/2023 11:05 AM

I'm an electrical engineer. I don't think that I've ever had a comment on my electrical plans by the SFDB.

Anonymous

2/21/2023 12:13 PM

My main concern with the board is that members' comments regarding architectural style are often not objective, well-informed, or professional. Members should be open-minded to architectural styles whether or not they fit their own personal preferences.

Anonymous

2/21/2023 12:28 PM

My main criticism would be how time consuming and expensive the bureaucratic process is.

Anonymous

2/21/2023 01:39 PM

Stop this campaign against new architecture and new, better, more expensive and sustainable material. Preserving track homes should not be your goal or mandate. Materials have changed in the last 70 years. Allow for large windows!

Anonymous

2/21/2023 01:20 PM

I felt the comments were "nit-picky" and opinionated. My architect designed the project within the required parameters. The review board just wanted "their pound of flesh."

Anonymous

2/21/2023 02:22 PM

They continued to not further the design review because we wanted to build 3 stories. We are within the building code height limits and BS has a published recommendation for 3 story design .

Anonymous

2/21/2023 02:29 PM

Otherwise ok

Anonymous

2/21/2023 04:54 PM

Single family residences are deeply personal for the owners. We already have detailed zoning standards and requirements along with design guidelines sufficient to ensure good or reasonably good design.

Anonymous

2/21/2023 05:27 PM

SFDB should follow the guidelines on all projects...not just some.

Anonymous

2/22/2023 05:42 AM

See above

Anonymous

2/22/2023 04:26 PM

Overall, most of the architects in front of the SFDB are trained and thoughtful. The purview of the SFDB should be LIMITED to broad mass/bulk/scale appropriateness and not devolve into protracted discourse of materials, details, and minutia.

Anonymous

2/22/2023 11:19 AM

In some cases, Board members do not seem to be qualified to evaluate design and/or read plans. For example, too much emphasis is placed on the FAR calculation, or a particular guideline as compared to providing the applicant with useful design feedback.

Anonymous

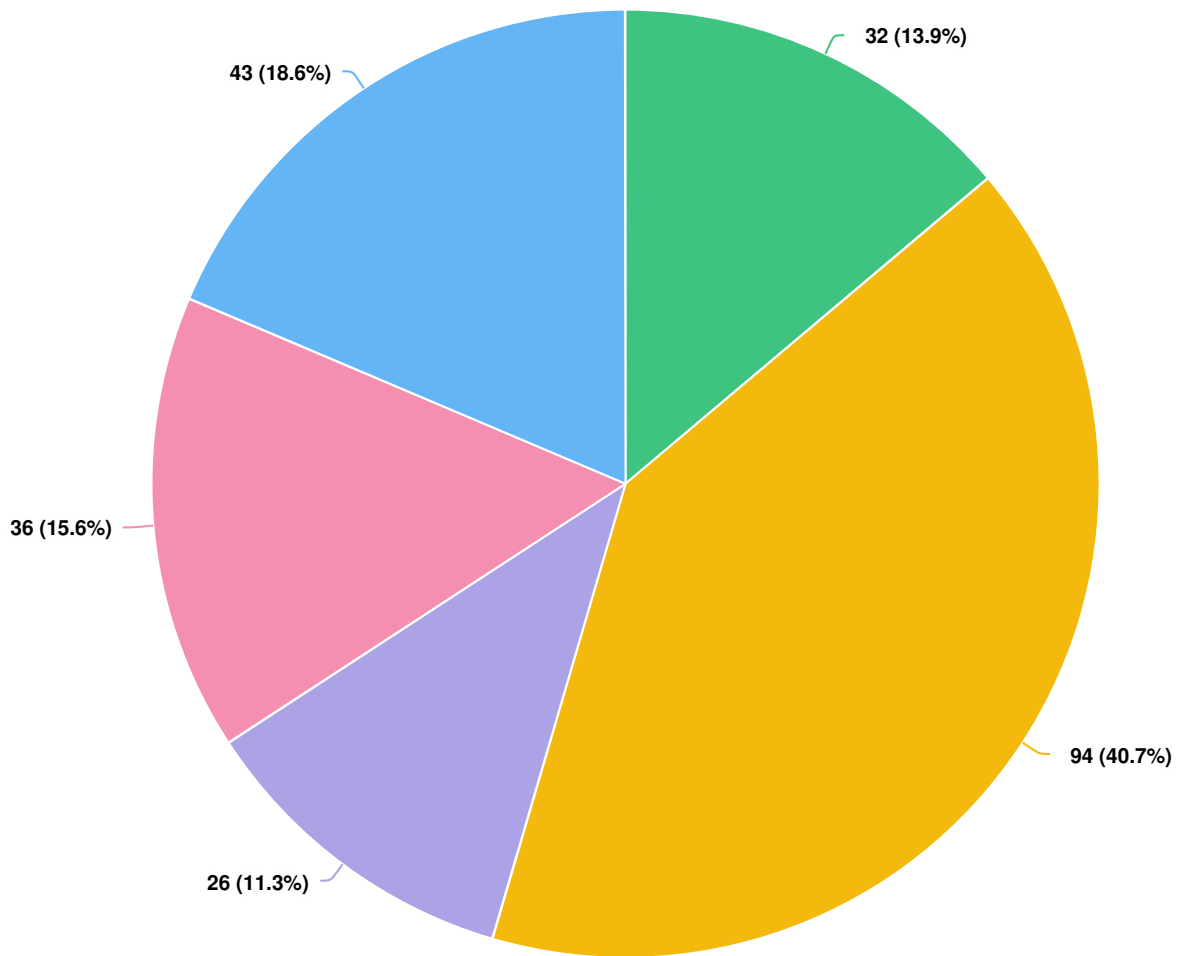
2/22/2023 12:36 PM

Two main things. 1) They go too far. They should make sure projects should meet a minimum standard, not be perfect. 2) They are sometimes not polite/respectful.

Optional question (123 response(s), 314 skipped)

Question type: Single Line Question

Q8 The City's design guidelines checklists are easy to understand and help me prepare me for SFDB design review hearings.

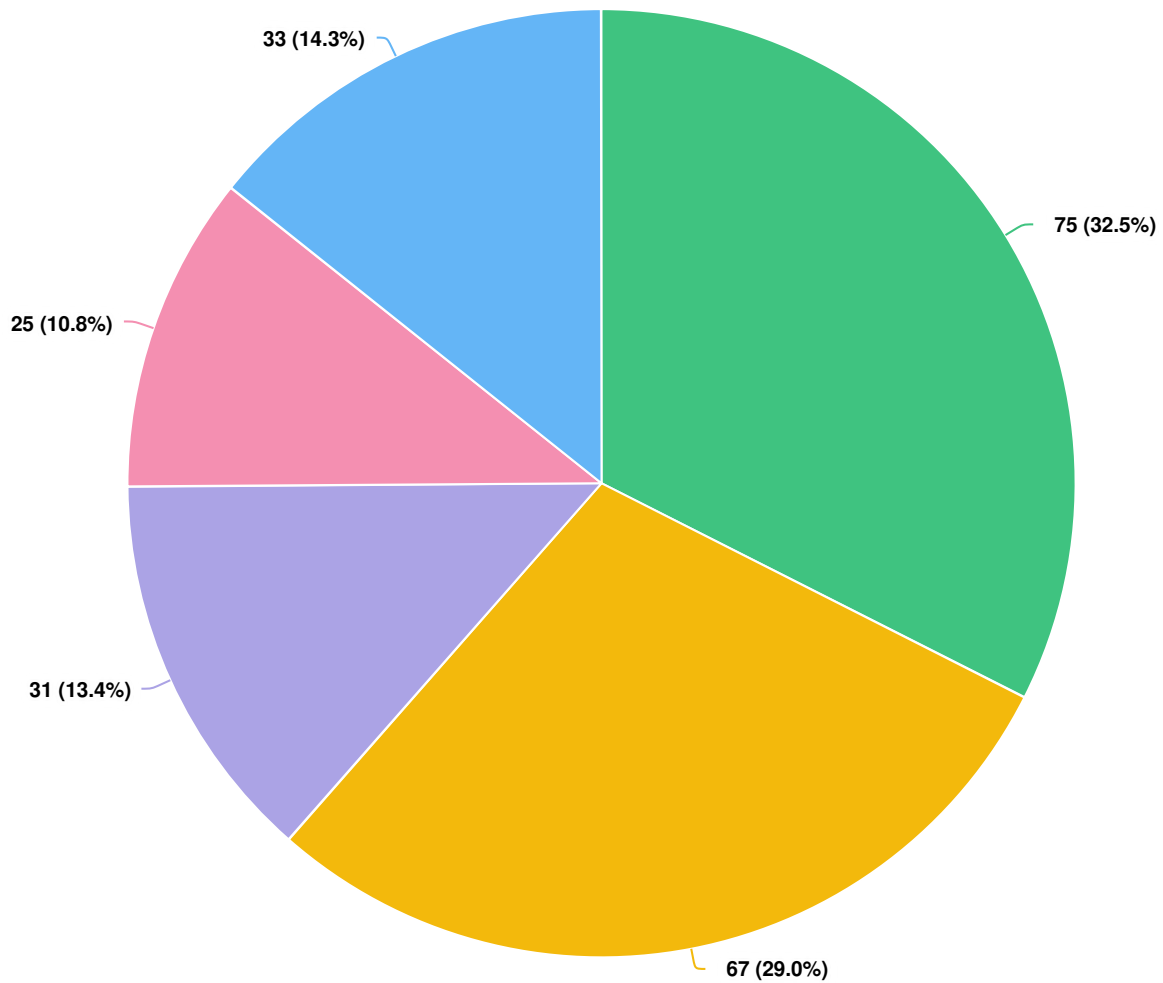


Question options

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- I don't know about the design review checklists
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

Mandatory Question (230 response(s))
Question type: Radio Button Question

Q9 During application completeness review, staff input on compliance with design guidelines would be helpful feedback prior to my scheduled SFDB hearing.

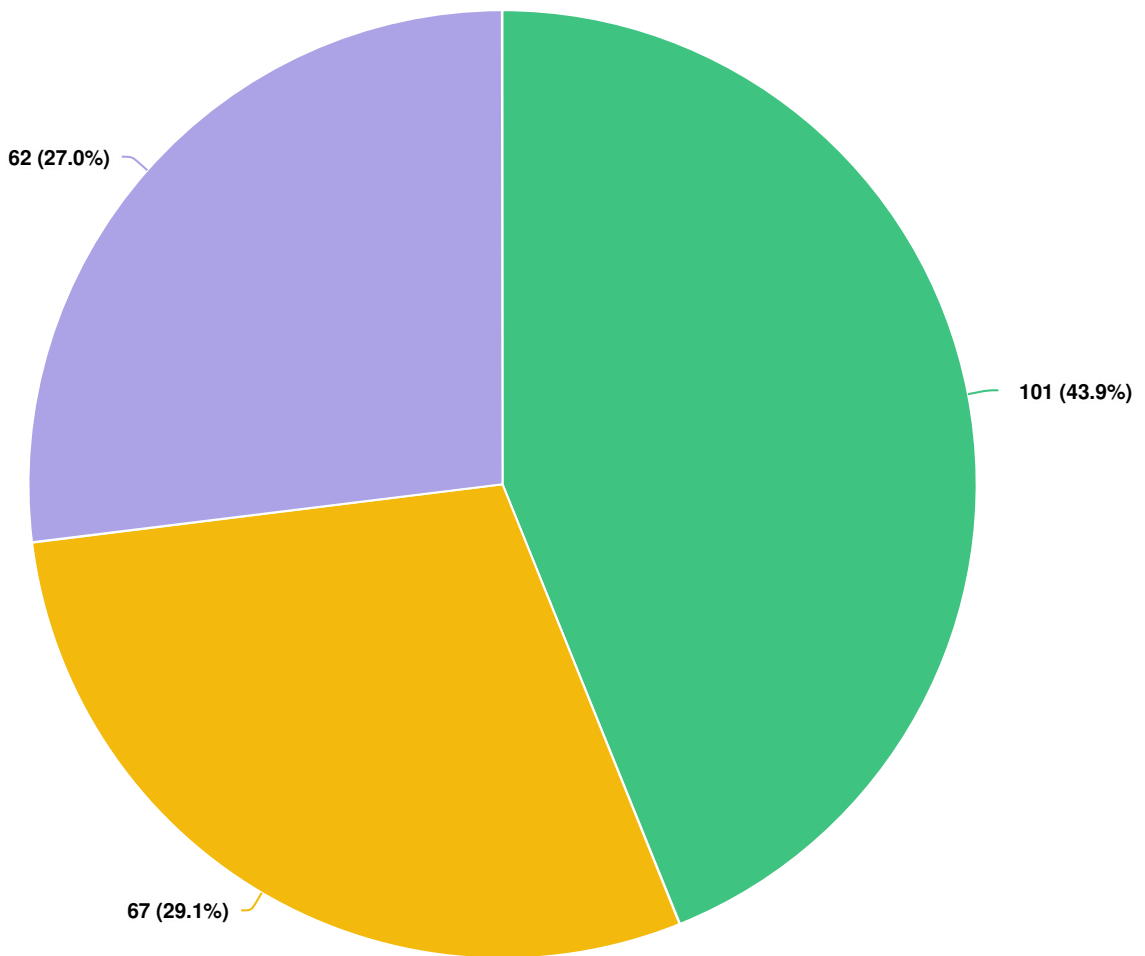


Question options

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- No opinion
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

Mandatory Question (230 response(s))
Question type: Radio Button Question

Q10 At a public hearing, the SFDB requested materials not listed on the City's initial submittal requirement checklists (e.g. sections, neighborhood context studies, perspective drawings, streetscape renderings, photo simulations, 20 closest lots surve...

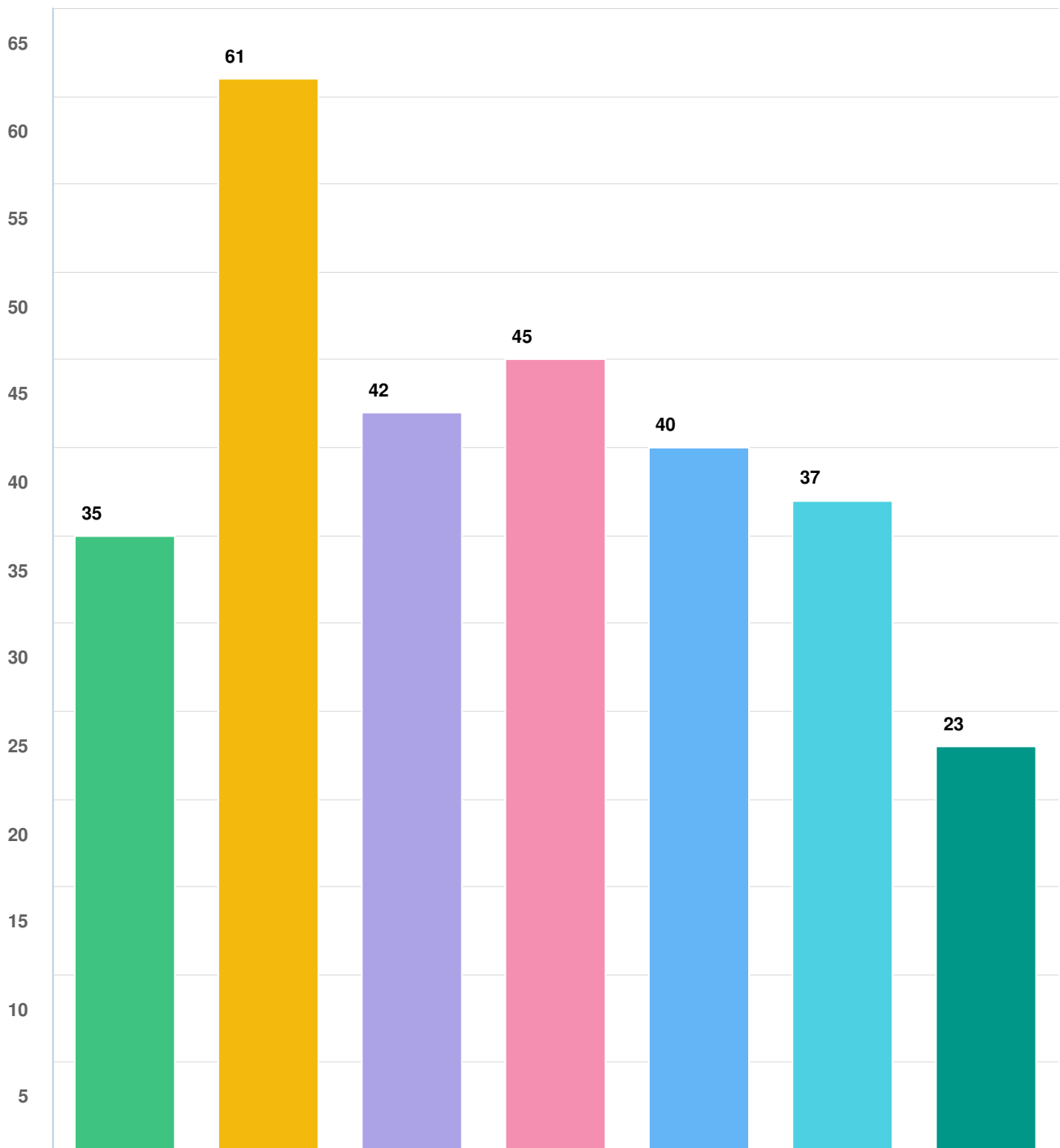


Question options

- Yes
- No
- N/A

Optional question (230 response(s), 207 skipped)
Question type: Radio Button Question

Q11 If yes, what additional materials were required by the SFDB?

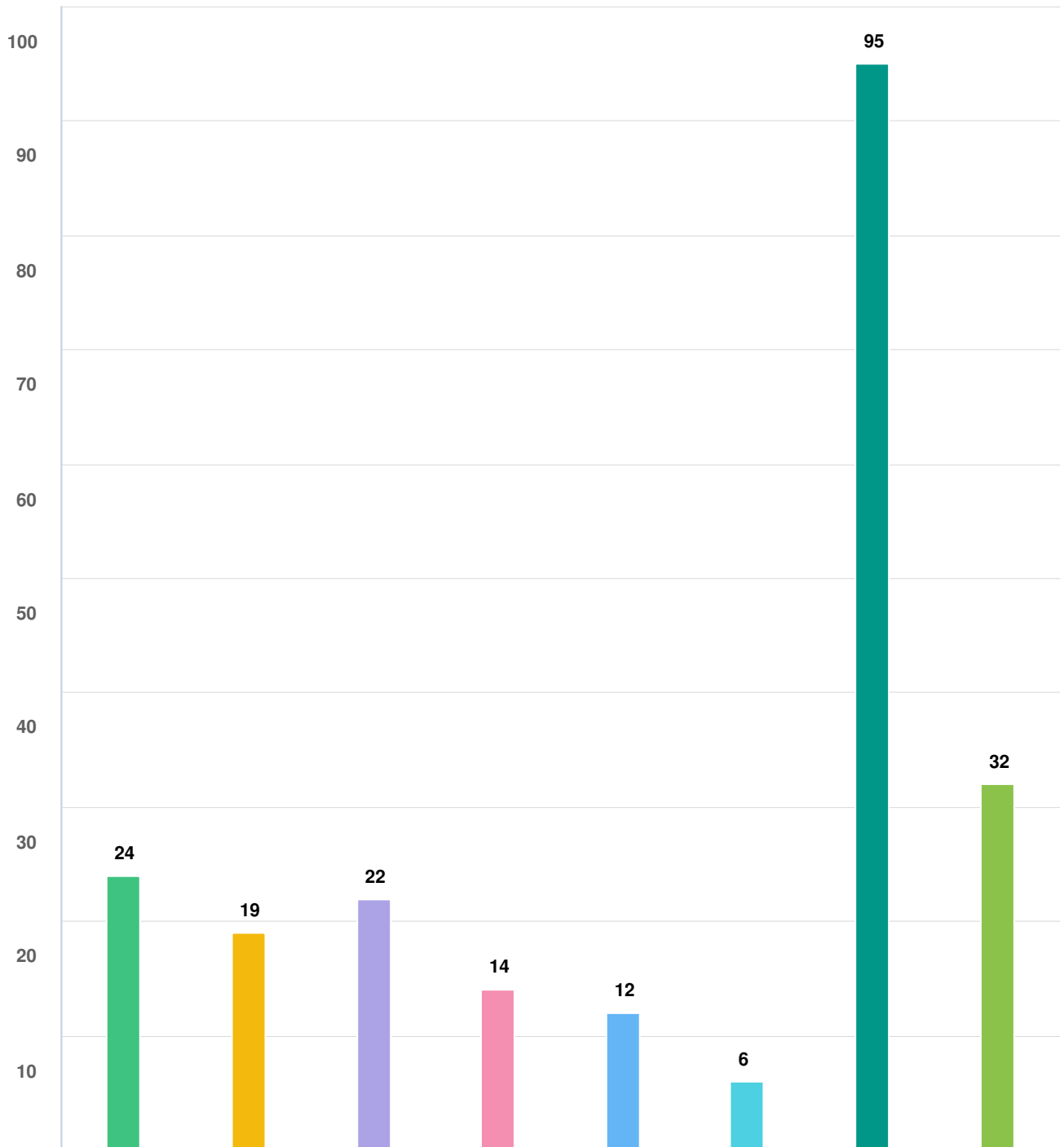


Question options

- Sections
- Neighborhood context studies
- Perspective drawings
- Streetscape renderings
- Photo simulations
- 20 Closest lots survey
- Other (please specify)

Optional question (106 response(s), 331 skipped)
 Question type: *Checkbox Question*

Q12 In your opinion, should any additional materials be required as part of the initial application submittal? Check all that apply.



Question options

- Sections
- Neighborhood context studies
- Perspective drawings
- Streetscape renderings
- Photo simulations
- 20 Closest lots survey
- N/A
- Other (please specify)

Optional question (177 response(s), 260 skipped)
 Question type: Checkbox Question

Q13 | What, if anything, would you have liked to have known beforehand to feel better prepared during your SFDB hearing?

ekokinda
2/07/2023 12:01 PM

ndfskdjf

Anonymous
2/08/2023 05:38 PM

N/A

Anonymous
2/09/2023 04:39 AM

I think if an applicant (agent,owner,architect) reads provided material they are adequately prepared. The only way to prepare for individual board members pet peeves would be to watch previous meeting videos. Chairperson needs to be a real guide and chair

Anonymous
2/09/2023 11:26 AM

Hard to answer this. I guess, I would have liked to know that Board Member A or B had a bad day and was going to discredit any project brought before them.

Anonymous
2/09/2023 02:21 PM

That they would dictate everything from which color white we chose to the color of our gravel, and that each time we would get sent back, it would take months and thousands of dollars in new plans, then go back and they would not like changes they wanted

Anonymous
2/09/2023 02:40 PM

Design board personal preferences can be imposed as to style over function for such things as number of lites/pains in windows. Process was long. While going thru engineer/plan check, new members impose new conditions when only color was to be finalized.

Anonymous
2/09/2023 02:22 PM

that the review board only listens to the neighbors, and the planning rules and ordinances really dont matter.

Anonymous
2/09/2023 02:46 PM

who will be present among the board members since many are not design professionals or practiced in design principals

Anonymous
2/09/2023 02:45 PM

Expected durations not to exceed.

Anonymous

How ridiculous the process would be. It is almost like they have to

2/09/2023 02:53 PM

thing of 'something' to push back on to make themselves feel important.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:07 PM

If an approval is likley and I would LOVE to have my planner present. Unfortunately 99% of the time they are MIA.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 10:33 AM

That the schedule is not accurate. That depending on the community involvement you could be waiting for a long time. Is there a better way to address neighbor comments before hearings? A way to make the hearings run smoother and more timely?

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:11 PM

Better example available for designers to reference. Maybe classes offered to local designers to explain expectations

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:07 PM

I find the Board often asks for items at a conceptual hearing taht are not listed as submittal requirements until preliminary or final.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:23 PM

That the review process was going to be subjective and not necessarily fallow the SB guidelines.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:25 PM

That getting a permit was a complete waste of time and money. None of my neighbors got one bc the city is so difficult.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:37 PM

If there is anything missing in my submittal.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:33 PM

I feel I am well seasoned.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:42 PM

That the SFBD is here to help applicants, not set them through impossible standards, or standards that don't exist. Also, a full board w/o any potential for loss of quorum would also be helpful.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:40 PM

Have more competent inspectors

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:45 PM

A correct inventory of all material actual required and my rights when other materials are "required" by a single board member.

Anonymous 2/09/2023 03:40 PM	Nothing
Anonymous 2/09/2023 03:39 PM	N/A
Anonymous 2/09/2023 04:41 PM	n/a
Anonymous 2/09/2023 04:19 PM	Has the board eaten recently (are they hangry). Are they going to ask questions out of scope (ADU etc)?
Anonymous 2/09/2023 04:05 PM	I did not attend
Anonymous 2/09/2023 05:10 PM	Board members (some) were not well prepared and / or had personal agends to push.
Anonymous 2/09/2023 07:01 PM	I did not realize that being in the Good Ol' Boy network was more important than actual quality design work.
Anonymous 2/09/2023 07:14 PM	it was very clear
Anonymous 2/09/2023 09:51 PM	City Hall is closed on fridays. For many people Friday is the only day they can go to City Hall. Live persons never pick up the phone. Long wait times from staff. Inconsistent information and answers provided by staff. Time delays are unacceptable.
Anonymous 2/09/2023 10:10 PM	All the CA cities do zoom, even post-pandemic. But SB is the only one that required applicant to be present in person.
Anonymous 2/09/2023 10:15 PM	That the hearing take a lifetime I, hearing should disappear and make the department more technical and more architectural oriented
Anonymous 2/09/2023 10:19 PM	how picky they can be

Anonymous

2/09/2023 10:34 PM

A fair set of guidelines that all abide by.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 03:42 AM

It was difficult for even my architect to keep up with the latest rules and I'm unsure the city staff interpreted them the same. The design doesn't talk to building department which is extremely frustrating. We go back and forth as homeowners.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 04:36 AM

Nothing. The issue is that's it's a roll of the dice on if the board will like what you propose. It seems like they almost feel that they HAVE to comment, and are creating work. The question is how many projects pass the first time?

Anonymous

2/10/2023 07:38 AM

What the board member requested was something a planner had me previously remove from the plan set. Fortunately, it was a zoom meeting, so I could retrieve the missing images.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 08:09 AM

If a landscape plan is required when minor landscaping is involved.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 08:09 AM

Board members are just busybodies.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 08:18 AM

I don't really have any issues with SFDB

Anonymous

2/10/2023 08:42 AM

Let's see what the new code cycle brings, I'm confident any changes will be as straightforward and concise as previous requirements.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 09:23 AM

Whether or not the board members are going to derail a project, insert bias, had a bad day, be rude and disrespectful...because this is what I prepare my clients for.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 09:16 AM

The SFDB needs to cut down to allow lower income homeowners to properly develop their properties.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 09:49 AM

There is too much that is being required for simple projects. The process for simple project takes too long

Anonymous

2/10/2023 09:52 AM

What items to give focus to during the hearing/presentation

Anonymous

2/10/2023 10:17 AM

A more defined approach of SFDB to design theory of the reviewing panel would be helpful.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 10:18 AM

How much time this adds to the permit process.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 10:57 AM

Simpler design guidelines and policies

Anonymous

2/10/2023 12:50 PM

This is a loaded question. If the design is good, that it fits under the parameters of the design guidelines, there is no problem.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 01:16 PM

Process review is too slow. Not enough employees. Every end Friday department closed. Terrable customers service. No one answer the phone

Anonymous

2/10/2023 02:37 PM

It seems different rules apply to different applicants. SFDB is NOT consistent. Be consistent!

Anonymous

2/10/2023 03:06 PM

That the Board actually had the authority to consider the project and make design changes re items that it had discretion over. The city should develop objective design standards or better yet eliminate the Board

Anonymous

2/10/2023 06:29 PM

Everything then I would not have built.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 06:43 PM

I would have liked to get a counter permit as I was told at the beginning!! The design review was totally unnecessary for the replacement of existing windows!!!!!!

Anonymous

2/11/2023 09:32 AM

that our architect's explanations and responses would be accounted for

Anonymous

2/11/2023 11:39 AM

I would feel better knowing that since the Design Guideline checklists exists, that Board members use them for each project during the

hearings. I feel that they exist but are unused by SFDB, making the whole process inefficient.

Anonymous

2/11/2023 06:20 PM

Nothing, the whole thing was a complete power trip. These people should not have a say on what we do with our homes. This is completely an overstep.

Anonymous

2/12/2023 05:55 AM

That board members use their personal opinions to impact decisions affecting the others' properties.

Anonymous

2/12/2023 09:21 AM

Yes in any type of project is important to be prepared more giddiness in regards to the project will help.

Anonymous

2/12/2023 09:15 AM

Decision making process of the Board

Anonymous

2/13/2023 07:52 AM

Maybe a sample video of sãa typical meeting. Ad a homeowner you can get scared of the expectations.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 11:51 AM

The fact that on larger lots they will still hold to the 85% FAR when it is not required.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 10:46 AM

no

Anonymous

2/13/2023 11:45 AM

Falling w/i Summerland Community Plan, needs clear distinction of the process and jurisdiction of the Summerland SBAR...clear disconnect between what is requested by Summerland SBAR and what citizens really care want...controlled by self-designated few

Anonymous

2/13/2023 11:52 AM

there focus of FAR for sites larger than 1/2 acre, we read it very differently than they interpret

Anonymous

2/13/2023 12:11 PM

I would have liked to know I was going to be held to a standard not followed by 90% of my neighborhood.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 12:39 PM

Clear direction on what is expected. Property owners should have relative fidelity with reasonable design and functional use of one

owns' property.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 12:51 PM

That this board can unilaterally kill or change your project with little to no recourse.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 01:02 PM

They seem over concerned about glass railings and lantern effect.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 01:16 PM

Be more prepared to answer some of the Board Member's "personal" questions - ie; "how they FEEL about a project", some members assert their own opinions about the projects, not sticking to reviewing the project objectively on behalf of the city.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 01:19 PM

What the personal taste of each board member would be as they are very opinionated and, in general, really disliked our design as it wasn't Spanish Mediterranean

Anonymous

2/13/2023 01:28 PM

How to avoid it.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 02:56 PM

I would like to have known that the board assumes authority over items such as the shade of off-white, roof materials, style of stone application to exterior siding, as well as the size of the home, even though we are on a 1/2 acre and under a 93% FAR.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 05:01 PM

How subjective things can be. It is frustrating to have guidelines be taken as maximums and board members make false, misinformed claims regarding what they think they can see when they walk by a property

Anonymous

2/13/2023 05:15 PM

They will make you change something and come back for further review, even if it's very minor. Just so they can make themselves relevant.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 06:16 PM

How long the entire process was going to take! Two years from application to permit. It was expensive and annoying!

Anonymous

2/13/2023 08:31 PM

As a homeowner, the process is so daunting that you often need to hire an architect/planner/agent to get through the process.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 10:32 PM

Rules of what they decline : materials they do not approve of etc

Anonymous

2/14/2023 09:25 AM

background of committee and staff

Anonymous

2/14/2023 01:22 PM

Nothing. They balanced well objectivity with their subjective views.
Good people!

Anonymous

2/14/2023 05:10 PM

My architect and I put a ton of work into preparing the materials and process. City recommended to SFDB not to proceed b/c exceeded FAR and did not inform us. Also City planning coordinator was poorly trained. Took over a year of prep work wasted.

Anonymous

2/15/2023 06:58 AM

That building a home in santa barbara can take more than a year in planning before even breaking ground. The subjectivity and inconsistency of outcome at meetings is very frustrating, costly, and the end result is not improved a great deal in the process.

Anonymous

2/15/2023 02:02 PM

1 year approval/denial process by the California government.

Anonymous

2/15/2023 02:51 PM

If SFDB has requirements in addition to those in SB9 state law for lot split approvals.

Anonymous

2/15/2023 04:52 PM

Neighbor's comments. They get to see our drawings before hand, fairness dictates discovery of their comments; We become targets for neighbors to shoot down. Often the building elements we are presenting, are already present in neighboring context

Anonymous

2/15/2023 03:05 PM

A realistic time frame

Anonymous

2/15/2023 06:22 PM

I would like to get a hearing sooner. 30 day letter covers items that should be building. We have to spend 15K of our client's money just get a conceptual hearing, I don't mind more input if it is at the beginning and we don't just get staff full review.

Anonymous

Which member might be absent/present. The Hearings occurred too

2/15/2023 06:35 PM

infrequently and hold up a project schedule and cost a lot of money to prepare. This is impractical for most homeowners.

Anonymous

2/15/2023 08:35 PM

How impossible it is to have anything approved in a timely or cost efficient manner by the city.

Anonymous

2/16/2023 09:15 AM

You never know, sometimes it is very unpredictable.

Anonymous

2/16/2023 12:54 PM

That quality of the work performed and abiding by design guidelines is far less important than appeasing SFDB board member's individual biases and neighborhood protectionism

Anonymous

2/16/2023 03:19 PM

The issue is with the lack of training of the current board. I do not feel that they are qualified to make impactful design comments that affect the outcome of an individual's private property and their right to develop

Anonymous

2/16/2023 07:27 PM

Its impossible to know anything beforehand given the random criteria the board uses to approve projects. Metal roofs, plate heights, style are all at the whim of the board and impossible to foresee.

Anonymous

2/17/2023 03:23 PM

What connects had been submitted

Anonymous

2/18/2023 05:41 PM

The review process felt arbitrary, subject to the architectural whims of the attending board members (only 2 attended). We met all requirements specified in our first hearing. No guideline violations were mentioned. Waste of time and money!

Anonymous

2/19/2023 08:48 AM

If the committee is allowed to use subjective personal opinions of a project, there will be no way to be completely prepared for a public review. It is unfair for the professionals involved who will be returning to the committee for future client projects

Anonymous

2/19/2023 09:54 AM

I was prepared

Anonymous

2/19/2023 10:29 AM

More clearly what requires a full board review and is simply a plan update.

Anonymous

2/19/2023 12:55 PM

Zoning or other limitations for project site

Anonymous

2/19/2023 04:27 PM

the disposition and opinions of the board members, as SFDB is a very subjective process, not driven by any particular guidelines

Anonymous

2/20/2023 10:35 AM

Specific neighborhood design criteria the board is going to consider that is not written in anywhere. I have received comments like "this doesn't fit with the quirky 50's tract home style of the neighborhood" or "your dormers are not whimsical enough"

Anonymous

2/20/2023 09:36 AM

..

Anonymous

2/20/2023 10:35 AM

if we received neighbor's complaints/ concerns before the meeting. Also, time sensitive to the agenda schedule. Smaller and less controversial projects should get review first.

Anonymous

2/20/2023 11:27 AM

Often SFDB members have their own agendas - this should not be allowed. I've been told "I don't like modern architecture so I'm voting against your project." Ridiculous. Same goes for opinions of plate heights, roofing materials, etc...

Anonymous

2/20/2023 12:42 PM

nothing can prepare a design professional or property owner for a subjective review by numerous individuals. there is no continuity by nature. therefore, the process is intended to create purposeful obstruction to development.

Anonymous

2/20/2023 12:38 PM

Ideally board participants should not come with a predetermined agenda which h seemed apparent form our meeetings.

Anonymous

2/20/2023 02:31 PM

SFDB may be punitive, subjective, and gang up on applicants

Anonymous

2/20/2023 05:22 PM

If additional materials are requested knowing ahead of time to come to the hearing with those materials would be helpful to avoid delays.

Anonymous

2/20/2023 10:58 PM

We were prepared with our materials, but not prepared for the frustration of dealing with a board with so much authority yet no oversight. We can't believe that the city hasn't had legal consequences based on decisions made at the board level.

Anonymous

2/20/2023 08:35 PM

have citizens speaking positively about the project, otherwise the board only hears the negatives and feels compelled to act upon the negative comments

Anonymous

2/20/2023 09:02 PM

Our review was very unpleasant. Comments made by members were unprofessional and lack of knowledge of current design elements. I was embarrassed for our architect. Should have been a fun 1 hour review. Instead a 6 month nightmare.

Anonymous

2/20/2023 10:46 PM

Our packet was complete

Anonymous

2/21/2023 08:16 AM

i would love a FAQ regarding the motions and what they mean. Numerous times have i left with a motion that was not as easily understandable.

Anonymous

2/21/2023 01:04 PM

NA

Anonymous

2/21/2023 12:28 PM

See above; a more complete list of specific requirements by the design board

Anonymous

2/21/2023 01:39 PM

That the SFDB would be an objective body and wouldn't take the most conservative, limited view of architecture the neighborhood. That they would stick to the guidelines in the book and not try to manipulate them to their own provincial aesthetics.

Anonymous

2/21/2023 01:20 PM

The things that they wanted to see that is not on the checklist. OR simply not require additional work which is cost to the owner.

Anonymous

2/21/2023 02:22 PM

Neighborhood compatibility seems to be very ambiguous. The building and zoning codes are very clear .

Anonymous

I now put more detail into the material board and renderings to help

2/21/2023 02:26 PM

with my vision

Anonymous

2/21/2023 02:29 PM

What to expect at the hearing and the background of the members

Anonymous

2/21/2023 04:54 PM

It would have been good to know that the submittal checklist might not be sufficient.

Anonymous

2/21/2023 05:27 PM

That some of members of the design board aren't really architects

Anonymous

2/21/2023 07:10 PM

I would have liked to know that the board was so opposed to modern design or seemingly any design style outside of the local vernacular. It would have saved a lot of time and money.

Anonymous

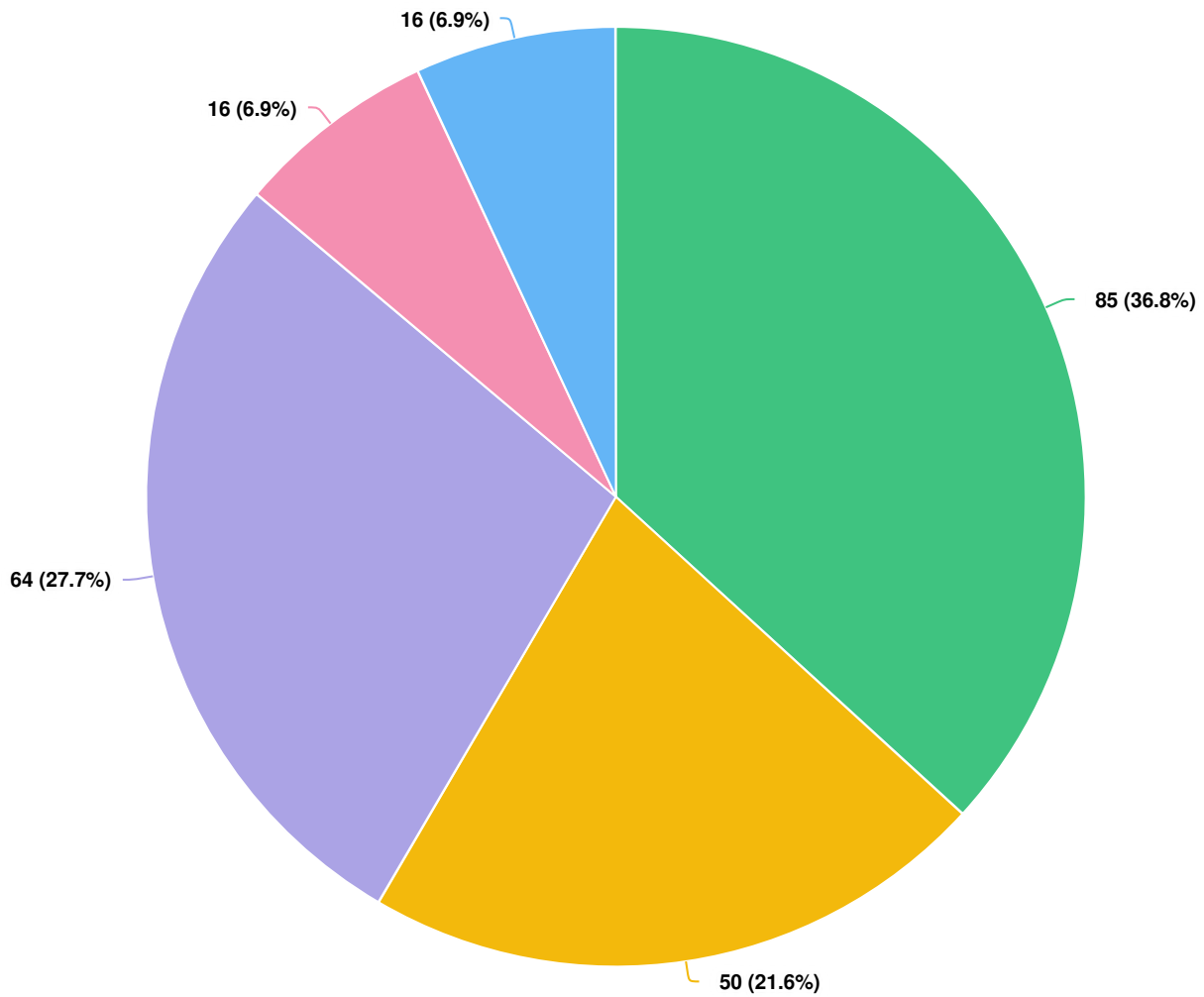
2/23/2023 12:30 PM

I think we went before the SFDB in 2007 when they were established. I know we went to the PC.

Optional question (123 response(s), 314 skipped)

Question type: Single Line Question

Q14 | The feedback that I received during SFDB hearings significantly altered my overall project costs.



Question options

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- No opinion
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

Mandatory Question (230 response(s))
Question type: Radio Button Question

Q15 | What were the specific design changes that significantly altered your overall project costs?

Anonymous

2/08/2023 07:14 PM

Significant revisions

Anonymous

2/09/2023 11:26 AM

Often the process is the thing that impacts the cost. Having to go through the PLN process multiple times is challenging for smaller projects, FAR Mods add costs, SFDB hearings add costs

Anonymous

2/09/2023 02:27 PM

requests to alter existing; rooflines, landscape and exterior materials

Anonymous

2/09/2023 02:21 PM

Being sent from SFDB to historical to back to SFDB, all with new plans required each time, then making changes they wanted only to be told at next meeting they didn't like the changes. And, it all took over two years, which cost a significant amount

Anonymous

2/09/2023 02:40 PM

Windows? doors and Landscaping.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 02:22 PM

time, time time for the permit.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 02:31 PM

To disagree with their views means project delays. To comply requires redesign in many instances. On our project - going before the Review Board three times was very costly and took too much time.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 02:46 PM

customization of design costs homeowners lots of money to an already expensive industry. homeowners find it difficult to select off-the-shelf or pre-fab materials, because the SFDB demands overly custom features

Anonymous

2/09/2023 02:45 PM

Timing and changes to original design including foundations, site walls and drainage.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 02:53 PM

Having to redo plans- adding things like landscaping and paying someone to draw those.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:07 PM

1) letters from neighbors 2) tree/ arborist reports 3) exterior lighting studies 4) Drone photos 5) Requested a geologist to attend 6) Indian report 7) Multiple Letters from Montecito Trails Foundation

Anonymous

2/10/2023 10:33 AM

As a landscape architect, the changes given to the architect can significantly change the landscape. Though the landscape is rarely addressed to the same level of detail as the architecture.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 02:59 PM

Red tag process. Lack of communication by [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:02 PM

A/C and roof line.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:11 PM

Flood zone elevations changes, historic review, Mbar review opinions

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:07 PM

More costly materials - ie: stone walls

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:23 PM

The design was made significantly more complicated resulting in a substantial increase in cost.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:25 PM

Deck railing

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:26 PM

Requiring a change in architectural style.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:29 PM

No design changes, but additional trips to jobsite that could have been handled a lot earlier in process if every one was on same page of what was needed in the beginning.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:42 PM

It's more about the project value. If plate heights are reduced, rooms eliminated, roof decks eliminated, etc. then these things can render a project financially infeasible, or at least wrecked applicant expectations for their dream home.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:45 PM

No design changes were required. Only a 6 week delay, added design fees to produce the colored elevations, and the cost of another trip down from SF to support our application.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:40 PM

Height, architectural design

Anonymous

2/09/2023 04:41 PM

Inconsistent comments regarding size/bulk/scale from one hearing to the next effect overall sentiment and fuel neighbors dislike for a project.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 04:19 PM

The additional time / stress were the biggest costs. Landscaping and materials requests. Ambiguity in the design process of what will be approved significantly impacts any property improvements

Anonymous

2/09/2023 05:56 PM

redesign to reduce mass, bulk, scale and additional detailing

Anonymous

2/09/2023 06:00 PM

subjective architectural style demands

Anonymous

2/09/2023 07:01 PM

Projects have been killed off by the sheer expense and complexity, aided by the adversarial nature of the process.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 08:46 PM

They made the project significantly more expensive

Anonymous

2/09/2023 10:10 PM

2nd floor offset from 1st costly in seismic country.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 10:15 PM

Redesign the project is a high cost and taking in consideration is what the owner wants, no what the neighbors want or the city officials think is right

Anonymous

2/09/2023 10:34 PM

Ceiling Height, Landscape, Material, the list goes on

Anonymous

2/09/2023 10:58 PM

Architect was POC - multiple iterations

Anonymous

2/10/2023 03:42 AM

House is within inches of setback (and has been for 98 years? But I was not allowed to alter the front for more curb appeal and to give architectural style. Historical does not mean it was built properly or with historical details.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 04:36 AM

Architectural time spent, and cost in rents from extending time frames.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 08:09 AM

Request to break up larger windows.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 08:09 AM

minutiae

Anonymous

2/10/2023 09:23 AM

Making me return for further review w/ no useful input. Just had a project approved after two years of review . Made no changes to the design in the entire two years. Board said design had to be "Spanish /didn't "like" metal roof. Not in design district.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 09:51 AM

It was the added time and additional studies that cost my clients, the designs remained mostly unchanged from first submittal. Only YEARS of billable hours were lost to defending them.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 09:49 AM

storm water design and alterations after design review altered the plans

Anonymous

2/10/2023 09:52 AM

Requirement of a specific sandstone

Anonymous

2/10/2023 09:57 AM

Fence requirements, material requirements.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 10:18 AM

Window/Door Type, Style, Function

Anonymous

2/10/2023 01:16 PM

City requiremnts "not like" vinal windows that as commonly available adding cost and lead timeble everything needs to be special order that increase cost of the project and I.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 02:37 PM

Too many architectural changes - move a door, make windows smaller, lower ceiling heights...etc

Anonymous

2/10/2023 03:06 PM

SFDB delayed the project by 6 months leading to an increase in material costs. Further it resulted in addition noticing and architectural fees as well as a threat of litigation.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 03:38 PM

Very strict on energy calculations which made our project much more expensive

Anonymous

2/10/2023 06:29 PM

Changing my roof design twice first dictating flat from pitched then back to pitched having forgotten they are the ones who made me change it to flat.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 06:43 PM

Having to do the design review and the cost of having to complete the required materials.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 08:13 PM

Small changes to the house's outside shape and small changes to the deck design which triggered cascades of changes to other elements, including floor plans, driveway, etc. There were significant impacts on overall project value and scheduling.

Anonymous

2/11/2023 11:39 AM

redesign fees (architecture & engineering design costs), increased costs for materials

Anonymous

2/11/2023 06:20 PM

Changing window shapes, exterior facade panelling, rejection of new doorway/entryway, basically minutia that cost me more money with the draftsman and having to go back and make "corrections." This also stalled the project.

Anonymous

2/12/2023 09:21 AM

When new colors , type materials and styles are been match to existing building there is no need to add more work of input from Board

Anonymous

2/12/2023 09:15 AM

Delay.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 10:59 AM

See previous answers

Anonymous
2/13/2023 11:45 AM
Need to go back for insignificant color change and within allowance landscape plans

Anonymous
2/13/2023 12:39 PM
Demand for less glazing. Personal design suggestions.

Anonymous
2/13/2023 12:51 PM
Complete redesign of the roofline, exterior materials, window layout

Anonymous
2/13/2023 01:16 PM
Multiple reviews added costs to paying the architect more fees for the additional reviews.

Anonymous
2/13/2023 01:19 PM
Complete redesign of the exterior of the home, including changing the direction of the roof pitch. Feedback from SFDB was too convoluted and contradictory to see a clear path forward in improving our existing design. So we felt compelled to change it.

Anonymous
2/13/2023 01:28 PM
We had to redraw the plan, pay more for the money we borrowed for the project. The guidelines changed every time were submitted - it was just horrible.

Anonymous
2/13/2023 04:26 PM
Our project was approved around 2020 and I honestly don't remember these details.

Anonymous
2/13/2023 05:01 PM
overreaching comments and inconsistent illogical comments during review extended the project timeline and add unnecessary additional landscaping to screen a house that already was not visible from the street.

Anonymous
2/13/2023 05:15 PM
Requiring specific materials to be used. Over landscaping the projects for unnecessary screening.

Anonymous
2/13/2023 06:16 PM
Additional perspective drawings, additional (new) requirements like water runoff

Anonymous
2/13/2023 08:31 PM
Meaningless fees to the coastal commission and city

Anonymous

2/13/2023 10:32 PM

I had to pay to hear them arguing over their opinions

Anonymous

2/14/2023 09:25 AM

change for change sake

Anonymous

2/14/2023 05:10 PM

Irrigation drawing, backflow valve spec, controller spec, color of fascia boards and stucco, permeable driveway, perspective drawings, renderings, drainage detail, exterior lighting, etc. that required multiple rounds of iterations on drawings

Anonymous

2/15/2023 06:58 AM

Requirement of additional renderings not required by current code, subjective comments made my board members about how they feel about the home's design (not following code), requiring additional costly engineering reporting above and beyond current code

Anonymous

2/15/2023 12:48 PM

Cost to redesign (architect fees)

Anonymous

2/15/2023 02:51 PM

i was told that my lot could not be split even though it meets all SB9 state law requirements.

Anonymous

2/15/2023 04:52 PM

Redoing design layouts so that they limit views into neighboring lots. We don't live in such a beautiful area to look into neighbors lots, but to see the vistas beyond. The board gets caught trying to appease neighbors too much. Glass handrails.....

Anonymous

2/15/2023 06:22 PM

Door and window material.

Anonymous

2/15/2023 08:35 PM

Updated building codes, unrealistic setback standards

Anonymous

2/16/2023 12:54 PM

Would prefer not to mention to maintain anonymity

Anonymous

2/16/2023 07:27 PM

Window types, unnecessary detailing, complex roof structures, siding material

Anonymous

2/17/2023 03:23 PM

Had to redo entire 2nd floor

Anonymous

2/18/2023 05:41 PM

In the end, no improvements were approved. We could have simply reconstructed what we already had without review (repair and replace).

Anonymous

2/19/2023 10:10 AM

Project 1: Altering the front plate of the house was the most significant change -- this entailed adding a wide/deep front porch. Project 2 (replacing knob & tube electrical in rental property) - review process didn't require 2 grounds but inspector did

Anonymous

2/19/2023 10:29 AM

Unrealistic (3x) amount of additional oak trees required to mitigate lost trees. 400sq ft permeable patio next to foundation when site is engineered to shed water to nearby swale that returns to ground water

Anonymous

2/19/2023 04:27 PM

change of architectural style from contemporary to a historic style more closely matching the primary residence

Anonymous

2/20/2023 10:35 AM

Adjusting plans to address SFDB personal design issues, reducing FAR that have no real design implications, additional landscape plan requirements and a project that went to SFDB, had a hearing, got sent to HLC and then back to SFDB

Anonymous

2/20/2023 09:36 AM

almost everything mentioned. Has a design review ever lowered the cost permits or construction?

Anonymous

2/20/2023 10:35 AM

Grading, size of the project

Anonymous

2/20/2023 11:27 AM

Forcing material changes due to SDFB member preference. Homes should not match their neighbors - SDFB promotes homogeneity and in some cases creates neighborhoods with little interest and diversity.

Anonymous

2/20/2023 12:42 PM

the design review process costs money. receiving comments that cause additional design work costs money. property owners like to know a project's projected costs. people like predictability. design review by individuals can never be predictable.

Anonymous
2/20/2023 02:04 PM
Hiring a geologist to make sure the extra weight of the solar panels was not going to make the cliff fall!

Anonymous
2/20/2023 05:22 PM
n/a

Anonymous
2/20/2023 10:58 PM
Opinions for FAR on past and present boards are inconsistent and difficult to design to - especially on small lots. Most of our project costs were in an effort to comply with the board's opinion on FAR.

Anonymous
2/20/2023 05:51 PM
Time

Anonymous
2/20/2023 08:35 PM
all suggested design changes resulted in approval delay. All suggested costs included various professional fees and increases associated with inflation

Anonymous
2/20/2023 09:02 PM
Delays. Changes to windows, stone, fencing. We had to spend significant time going over the plans again and again.

Anonymous
2/21/2023 08:16 AM
primarily soft costs associated with additional design delays and City processing time

Anonymous
2/21/2023 01:04 PM
Having to redesign a project because it does not match the style of the surrounding area means that a project must altered and adds time has to be spent fixing the look of a project.

Anonymous
2/21/2023 12:28 PM
The addition of requirements that were not known prior to the presentation

Anonymous
2/21/2023 01:39 PM
More drawings and renderings and light studies and time! In the two years since we started dealing with SFDB, building costs have gone up fifty percent! By the time we are done, our building, will be larger and fit the neighborhood less than the original.

Anonymous
2/21/2023 01:20 PM
Additional consulting fees. Added site elements.

Anonymous

2/21/2023 02:22 PM

I was told a 3 story structure with a deck or viewing area was excepted but no habitable living area on the 3 elevation. Why it's clear the elevation and architecture was not of concern.

Anonymous

2/21/2023 04:54 PM

Design style changes, redesign of the homes from two story to one story,

Anonymous

2/21/2023 05:27 PM

engineering pages - arborist study - extra time with architectural details.

Anonymous

2/22/2023 05:42 AM

The lack of approval in the initial phase of metal roof requests delayed work and just created more fees the homeowner had to pay for permit costs.

Anonymous

2/22/2023 12:36 PM

Any request that makes the project more complex. Also asking us to "study" other ideas and options without regard for how complex or time consuming that would be.

Optional question (103 response(s), 334 skipped)

Question type: Single Line Question

Q16 | **Approximately how much in dollars did your overall project costs change?**

Anonymous

2/08/2023 07:14 PM

100K

Anonymous

2/09/2023 11:26 AM

\$50,000 - \$80,000

Anonymous

2/09/2023 02:27 PM

the requests had the potential to add \$100k to a relatively small addition and remodel project

Anonymous

2/09/2023 02:21 PM

Over \$150,000

Anonymous

2/09/2023 02:40 PM

\$50,000

Anonymous 2/09/2023 02:22 PM	\$30,000
Anonymous 2/09/2023 02:31 PM	250,000
Anonymous 2/09/2023 02:46 PM	\$10,000-\$100,000
Anonymous 2/09/2023 02:45 PM	Unknown, but over \$50K.
Anonymous 2/09/2023 02:53 PM	Thousands
Anonymous 2/09/2023 03:07 PM	1.5 million
Anonymous 2/09/2023 03:02 PM	\$100000
Anonymous 2/10/2023 10:33 AM	DESIGN FEES: these increase due to requests of the board for elevations/sections of the street/site. CONSTRUCTION BUDGET: the changes to the arch mean that the client has run out of budget by the time they get to the landscape.
Anonymous 2/09/2023 02:59 PM	\$200K
Anonymous 2/09/2023 03:02 PM	\$50,000
Anonymous 2/09/2023 03:11 PM	50,000\$ to several 100,000's in changes. Mostly in design cost for revision and many projects don't happen.
Anonymous 2/09/2023 03:07 PM	50,000
Anonymous 2/09/2023 03:23 PM	By nearly a million dollars.

Anonymous 2/09/2023 03:25 PM	10k
Anonymous 2/09/2023 03:26 PM	Thousands of dollars in redesign costs.
Anonymous 2/09/2023 03:29 PM	About \$1000 in extra trips to job site and City to verify information wanted/supplied was sufficient.
Anonymous 2/09/2023 03:42 PM	Just on landsacpe and grading alone, easily \$25K.
Anonymous 2/09/2023 03:45 PM	Unknown
Anonymous 2/09/2023 03:40 PM	Unknown
Anonymous 2/09/2023 04:41 PM	Depends on how long SFDB delays the project. On recent average, construction costs escalate at around 9% per year. Plus the additional soft costs design team fees necessary for all the additional hearings.
Anonymous 2/09/2023 04:19 PM	35,000-65,000
Anonymous 2/09/2023 05:11 PM	Hundreds of thousands
Anonymous 2/09/2023 05:17 PM	\$10,000
Anonymous 2/09/2023 05:56 PM	15% - 20%
Anonymous 2/09/2023 06:00 PM	10% to 20% cost overages
Anonymous 2/09/2023 07:01 PM	I have watched "the process" (in the last 10 years) kill off 1/3 of my TOTAL PROJECTS which were good basic improvements to existing buildings. The "process" is overly complex and expensive, it is systematically killing off my practice.

Anonymous 2/09/2023 08:46 PM	15000
Anonymous 2/09/2023 10:10 PM	\$80,000 +
Anonymous 2/09/2023 10:15 PM	25,000
Anonymous 2/09/2023 10:34 PM	\$25,000 - \$195,000 (Not accounting for lost time and future value)
Anonymous 2/09/2023 10:58 PM	5,000+
Anonymous 2/10/2023 03:42 AM	\$100,000 at least
Anonymous 2/10/2023 04:36 AM	\$20,000
Anonymous 2/10/2023 08:09 AM	40,000
Anonymous 2/10/2023 08:09 AM	\$100,000 plus totally wasted time and money for busybodies
Anonymous 2/10/2023 09:23 AM	The he delay cost the client about \$50,000 just in fees having to do extensive studies to prove compatibility, something they knew was compatible based on a simple drive-by. 2 years cost unknown costs in terms of delayed start.
Anonymous 2/10/2023 09:51 AM	A lot. Also, the stress (distress rather) that my clients have suffered cannot be valued in dollars and cents.
Anonymous 2/10/2023 09:49 AM	\$60,000
Anonymous	not sure yet

2/10/2023 09:52 AM

Anonymous \$100,000

2/10/2023 09:57 AM

Anonymous 300-1000

2/10/2023 10:18 AM

Anonymous 50,0000

2/10/2023 10:57 AM

Anonymous \$50000

2/10/2023 11:23 AM

Anonymous 25,000

2/10/2023 01:16 PM

Anonymous \$30k in architects fees, extending the process so I missed the good timing to refi, was not thrilled with my final project due to the constant compromises that the SFDB demanded

2/10/2023 02:37 PM

Anonymous \$30,000-50,000

2/10/2023 03:06 PM

Anonymous 350,000

2/10/2023 03:38 PM

Anonymous \$1,000,000+

2/10/2023 06:29 PM

Anonymous \$200

2/10/2023 06:43 PM

Anonymous \$25000

2/10/2023 08:13 PM

Anonymous unknown

2/11/2023 11:39 AM

Anonymous \$5k

2/11/2023 06:20 PM

Anonymous 2/12/2023 09:21 AM	5 to 10 thousand
Anonymous 2/12/2023 09:15 AM	\$20,000
Anonymous 2/13/2023 10:59 AM	Unknown as yet
Anonymous 2/13/2023 11:45 AM	2M+
Anonymous 2/13/2023 12:39 PM	\$35,000
Anonymous 2/13/2023 12:51 PM	\$20,000
Anonymous 2/13/2023 01:16 PM	not available
Anonymous 2/13/2023 01:19 PM	\$40,000
Anonymous 2/13/2023 01:28 PM	\$100,000
Anonymous 2/13/2023 04:26 PM	I would estimate that the delays associated with processing our building permit added \$50-100k in additional costs for a simple home addition.
Anonymous 2/13/2023 05:01 PM	\$100,000 in landscaping and additional invoices.
Anonymous 2/13/2023 05:15 PM	Depends on the project, but anywhere from 10%-20%
Anonymous 2/13/2023 06:16 PM	Whole project cost \$10,000 which is ridiculous

Anonymous
2/13/2023 10:32 PM
20k... repay engineer and architect on a simple design tgat none of my neighbors fought

Anonymous
2/14/2023 09:25 AM
Too much

Anonymous
2/14/2023 05:10 PM
\$35,000

Anonymous
2/15/2023 06:58 AM
\$50-100k

Anonymous
2/15/2023 02:51 PM
\$1.0 to \$1.50 Million

Anonymous
2/15/2023 04:52 PM
On average, maybe \$10k in design fees. Hard to estimate general construction cost changes from these experiences

Anonymous
2/15/2023 08:35 PM
I've had to pay over \$100,000 in personal costs unassociated with actual building or modifications of my projects JUST to get to the point for the city to then deny my projects.

Anonymous
2/16/2023 12:54 PM
>\$150k

Anonymous
2/16/2023 07:27 PM
15-20%

Anonymous
2/17/2023 03:23 PM
10k

Anonymous
2/18/2023 05:41 PM
Additional architect and structural engineering time. Probably several thousand dollars plus about 6 month delays in the project.

Anonymous
2/19/2023 10:10 AM
Project 1: I don't remember the \$\$, but required updating design + another structural engineering review/update. (I will state that this did enhance the outside looks of the house.) Project 2: Cost time & materials for union electrician to implement.

Anonymous 2/19/2023 10:29 AM	Trees cost, \$4000 in architect and review costs already to date, \$2500-\$10k to come. Permeable paver patio, additional \$5k quoted.
Anonymous 2/19/2023 04:27 PM	the project was ended by the owner, out of frustration - no dollar value can be assigned to not pursuing the project they had in mind
Anonymous 2/20/2023 10:35 AM	on average costs of 15-30k in design fees and 30 to 50k + in carrying costs for owners
Anonymous 2/20/2023 09:36 AM	\$20,000
Anonymous 2/20/2023 10:35 AM	Hard to say
Anonymous 2/20/2023 11:27 AM	n/a
Anonymous 2/20/2023 12:42 PM	from negligible to substantial. material costs, construction costs, architectural fees, engineering and consulting fees are all impacted.
Anonymous 2/20/2023 02:04 PM	\$15,000
Anonymous 2/20/2023 05:22 PM	n/a
Anonymous 2/20/2023 10:58 PM	10,000.00
Anonymous 2/20/2023 05:51 PM	10k
Anonymous 2/20/2023 08:35 PM	\$1.0-1.5 million.
Anonymous 2/20/2023 09:02 PM	Delays have cost \$50,000 so far. Don't know yet what the costs for the changes mandated will run.

Anonymous 2/21/2023 08:16 AM	unknown, but upwards of \$100,000
Anonymous 2/21/2023 01:04 PM	5,000
Anonymous 2/21/2023 12:28 PM	N/A
Anonymous 2/21/2023 01:39 PM	\$750,000
Anonymous 2/21/2023 01:20 PM	\$100,000
Anonymous 2/21/2023 02:22 PM	150k-200k
Anonymous 2/21/2023 04:54 PM	Most of the unexpected cost increases were design costs. Some increases were construction related.
Anonymous 2/21/2023 05:27 PM	\$125,000
Anonymous 2/22/2023 05:42 AM	In the low thousands, however, it should not have been a necessity to increase the costs at all.

Optional question (104 response(s), 333 skipped)

Question type: Single Line Question

Q17 | **Approximately how long (in months) did it take your most recent project to receive SFDB Project Design Approval from initial submittal to Project Design Approval? Answer has to be a number, e.g. 1, 6, 12**

ekokinda
2/07/2023 12:01 PM

6

Anonymous
2/08/2023 05:18 PM

2

Anonymous 3

2/08/2023 05:38 PM

Anonymous 4

2/08/2023 07:14 PM

Anonymous 1

2/09/2023 04:39 AM

Anonymous 12

2/09/2023 09:42 AM

Anonymous 8

2/09/2023 11:26 AM

Anonymous 2

2/09/2023 02:05 PM

Anonymous 9

2/09/2023 02:27 PM

Anonymous 24

2/09/2023 02:21 PM

Anonymous 24

2/09/2023 02:40 PM

Anonymous 12

2/09/2023 02:22 PM

Anonymous 24

2/09/2023 02:31 PM

Anonymous 9

2/09/2023 02:46 PM

Anonymous 10

2/09/2023 02:45 PM

Anonymous 3

2/09/2023 02:46 PM

Anonymous 36
2/09/2023 02:53 PM

Anonymous 25
2/09/2023 03:07 PM

Anonymous 0
2/09/2023 03:02 PM

Anonymous 6
2/10/2023 10:33 AM

Anonymous 6
2/09/2023 02:59 PM

Anonymous 6
2/09/2023 03:04 PM

Anonymous 10
2/09/2023 03:02 PM

Anonymous 0
2/09/2023 03:11 PM

Anonymous 5
2/09/2023 03:07 PM

Anonymous 6
2/09/2023 03:09 PM

Anonymous 10
2/09/2023 03:23 PM

Anonymous 15
2/09/2023 03:25 PM

Anonymous 3
2/09/2023 03:37 PM

Anonymous 7
2/09/2023 03:20 PM

Anonymous 10

2/09/2023 03:26 PM

Anonymous 1

2/09/2023 03:29 PM

Anonymous 5

2/09/2023 03:33 PM

Anonymous 3

2/09/2023 03:32 PM

Anonymous 12

2/09/2023 03:42 PM

Anonymous 24

2/09/2023 03:40 PM

Anonymous 3

2/09/2023 03:38 PM

Anonymous 3

2/09/2023 03:45 PM

Anonymous 18

2/09/2023 03:40 PM

Anonymous 12

2/09/2023 03:42 PM

Anonymous 12

2/09/2023 03:39 PM

Anonymous 3

2/09/2023 04:41 PM

Anonymous 8

2/09/2023 04:19 PM

Anonymous 6

2/09/2023 04:05 PM

Anonymous 2

2/09/2023 04:05 PM

Anonymous 8

2/09/2023 05:10 PM

Anonymous 8

2/09/2023 05:11 PM

Anonymous 2

2/09/2023 05:17 PM

Anonymous 12

2/09/2023 05:56 PM

Anonymous 6

2/09/2023 06:00 PM

Anonymous 6

2/09/2023 07:01 PM

Anonymous 6

2/09/2023 07:14 PM

Anonymous 3

2/09/2023 07:18 PM

Anonymous 12

2/09/2023 07:21 PM

Anonymous 0

2/09/2023 08:46 PM

Anonymous 8

2/09/2023 09:51 PM

Anonymous 0

2/09/2023 10:10 PM

Anonymous 24

2/09/2023 10:15 PM

Anonymous 3

2/09/2023 10:19 PM

Anonymous 4

2/09/2023 10:34 PM

Anonymous 6

2/09/2023 10:55 PM

Anonymous 6

2/09/2023 10:58 PM

Anonymous 0

2/10/2023 03:42 AM

Anonymous 4

2/10/2023 04:36 AM

Anonymous 3

2/10/2023 05:58 AM

Anonymous 12

2/10/2023 07:31 AM

Anonymous 2

2/10/2023 07:38 AM

Anonymous 5

2/10/2023 07:45 AM

Anonymous 2

2/10/2023 08:09 AM

Anonymous 6

2/10/2023 07:59 AM

Anonymous 8

2/10/2023 08:09 AM

Anonymous 1
2/10/2023 08:18 AM

Anonymous 2
2/10/2023 08:42 AM

Anonymous 0
2/10/2023 08:55 AM

Anonymous 24
2/10/2023 09:23 AM

Anonymous 3
2/10/2023 09:17 AM

Anonymous 9
2/10/2023 09:34 AM

Anonymous 25
2/10/2023 09:51 AM

Anonymous 0
2/10/2023 09:49 AM

Anonymous 0
2/10/2023 09:52 AM

Anonymous 9
2/10/2023 09:57 AM

Anonymous 3
2/10/2023 10:21 AM

Anonymous 6
2/10/2023 10:18 AM

Anonymous 2
2/10/2023 10:20 AM

Anonymous 2
2/10/2023 10:29 AM

Anonymous 10

2/10/2023 10:57 AM

Anonymous 6

2/10/2023 11:23 AM

Anonymous 0

2/10/2023 11:57 AM

Anonymous 1

2/10/2023 12:50 PM

Anonymous 3

2/10/2023 01:16 PM

Anonymous 10

2/10/2023 01:50 PM

Anonymous 8

2/10/2023 02:37 PM

Anonymous 6

2/10/2023 03:06 PM

Anonymous 1

2/10/2023 03:09 PM

Anonymous 6

2/10/2023 03:38 PM

Anonymous 3

2/10/2023 03:43 PM

Anonymous 12

2/10/2023 05:17 PM

Anonymous 3

2/10/2023 06:29 PM

Anonymous 6

2/10/2023 07:48 PM

Anonymous 2

2/10/2023 06:43 PM

Anonymous 1

2/10/2023 08:13 PM

Anonymous 8

2/11/2023 09:32 AM

Anonymous 6

2/11/2023 10:47 AM

Anonymous 24

2/11/2023 11:39 AM

Anonymous 8

2/11/2023 03:18 PM

Anonymous 8

2/11/2023 06:20 PM

Anonymous 12

2/12/2023 05:55 AM

Anonymous 2

2/12/2023 08:15 AM

Anonymous 3

2/12/2023 09:21 AM

Anonymous 7

2/12/2023 09:15 AM

Anonymous 1

2/12/2023 10:54 PM

Anonymous 1

2/13/2023 07:52 AM

Anonymous	6
2/13/2023 11:51 AM	
Anonymous	18
2/13/2023 10:00 AM	
Anonymous	3
2/13/2023 10:46 AM	
Anonymous	0
2/13/2023 10:59 AM	
Anonymous	0
2/13/2023 11:45 AM	
Anonymous	6
2/13/2023 11:52 AM	
Anonymous	24
2/13/2023 12:11 PM	
Anonymous	12
2/13/2023 12:39 PM	
Anonymous	14
2/13/2023 12:51 PM	
Anonymous	0
2/13/2023 01:16 PM	
Anonymous	20
2/13/2023 01:19 PM	
Anonymous	16
2/13/2023 01:28 PM	
Anonymous	12
2/13/2023 02:56 PM	
Anonymous	3
2/13/2023 04:26 PM	

Anonymous 12

2/13/2023 05:01 PM

Anonymous 21

2/13/2023 05:15 PM

Anonymous 24

2/13/2023 06:16 PM

Anonymous 18

2/13/2023 08:31 PM

Anonymous 8

2/13/2023 10:32 PM

Anonymous 6

2/14/2023 08:54 AM

Anonymous 3

2/14/2023 09:25 AM

Anonymous 6

2/14/2023 10:29 AM

Anonymous 1.5

2/14/2023 01:22 PM

Anonymous 12

2/14/2023 02:39 PM

Anonymous 8

2/14/2023 02:38 PM

Anonymous 0

2/14/2023 02:39 PM

Anonymous 8

2/14/2023 02:54 PM

Anonymous 10

2/14/2023 03:06 PM

Anonymous 7.5

2/14/2023 03:48 PM

Anonymous 8

2/14/2023 03:46 PM

Anonymous 36

2/14/2023 05:10 PM

Anonymous 6

2/14/2023 05:01 PM

Anonymous 0

2/15/2023 06:39 AM

Anonymous 18

2/15/2023 06:58 AM

Anonymous 12

2/15/2023 09:44 AM

Anonymous 6

2/15/2023 10:38 AM

Anonymous 0

2/15/2023 12:48 PM

Anonymous 2

2/15/2023 02:02 PM

Anonymous 12

2/15/2023 04:52 PM

Anonymous 0

2/15/2023 06:22 PM

Anonymous 9

2/15/2023 06:35 PM

Anonymous 18

2/15/2023 07:34 PM

Anonymous 18

2/15/2023 08:35 PM

Anonymous 12

2/16/2023 08:02 AM

Anonymous 2

2/16/2023 09:15 AM

Anonymous 0

2/16/2023 10:23 AM

Anonymous 12

2/16/2023 12:54 PM

Anonymous 6

2/16/2023 03:19 PM

Anonymous 8

2/16/2023 07:27 PM

Anonymous 0

2/17/2023 03:23 PM

Anonymous 6

2/18/2023 05:41 PM

Anonymous 6

2/19/2023 08:48 AM

Anonymous 2

2/19/2023 10:10 AM

Anonymous 1

2/19/2023 09:54 AM

Anonymous 24

2/19/2023 10:29 AM

Anonymous 6

2/19/2023 12:55 PM

Anonymous 12

2/19/2023 04:02 PM

Anonymous 8

2/19/2023 04:27 PM

Anonymous 9

2/20/2023 10:35 AM

Anonymous 6

2/20/2023 09:36 AM

Anonymous 3

2/20/2023 10:35 AM

Anonymous 8.5

2/20/2023 11:27 AM

Anonymous 0

2/20/2023 12:26 PM

Anonymous 0

2/20/2023 12:42 PM

Anonymous 6

2/20/2023 12:38 PM

Anonymous 6

2/20/2023 02:07 PM

Anonymous 12

2/20/2023 02:04 PM

Anonymous 4

2/20/2023 02:31 PM

Anonymous 6

2/20/2023 04:03 PM

Anonymous 18
2/20/2023 05:22 PM

Anonymous 9
2/20/2023 10:58 PM

Anonymous 2
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Anonymous 18
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2/20/2023 09:02 PM

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Anonymous 24
2/21/2023 01:39 PM

Anonymous 3
2/21/2023 01:20 PM

Anonymous 24
2/21/2023 02:22 PM

Anonymous 4
2/21/2023 02:04 PM

Anonymous 6
2/21/2023 02:26 PM

Anonymous 3
2/21/2023 02:29 PM

Anonymous 24
2/21/2023 04:54 PM

Anonymous 18
2/21/2023 05:27 PM

Anonymous 0
2/21/2023 07:10 PM

Anonymous 6
2/21/2023 10:39 PM

Anonymous 5
2/22/2023 05:42 AM

Anonymous 0
2/22/2023 04:26 PM

Anonymous 4
2/22/2023 09:45 AM

Anonymous 6
2/22/2023 11:19 AM

Anonymous 6

2/22/2023 10:57 AM

Anonymous

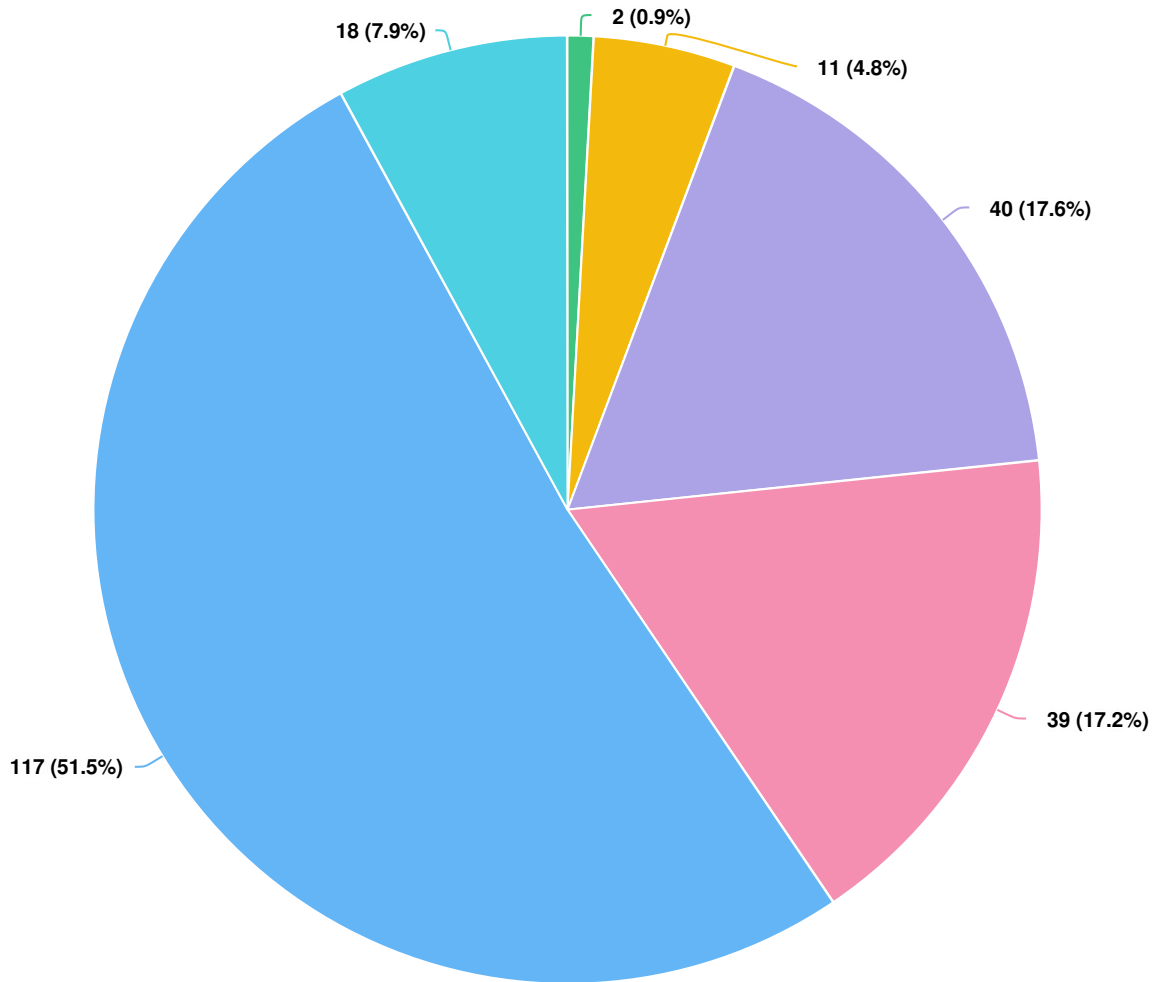
6

2/22/2023 12:36 PM

Optional question (209 response(s), 228 skipped)

Question type: Number Question

Q18 Overall, did the Project Design Approval timeframe meet your expectations?



Question options

- Much faster than expected
- A little faster than expected
- About what I expected
- A little slower than expected
- Much slower than expected
- My project has not yet received Project Design Approval

Optional question (226 response(s), 211 skipped)
Question type: Radio Button Question

Q19 | What factors do you believe affected the timeline to receive SFDB Project Design Approval?

Anonymous
2/08/2023 05:18 PM

Staff review

Anonymous
2/08/2023 05:38 PM

This was a unique case as I took over from another architect, so it's hard to put a useful number on how long it took

Anonymous
2/08/2023 07:14 PM

Case load - too many projects require revoew

Anonymous
2/09/2023 04:39 AM

figuring out how to explain why board member quirks do not apply to project at hand

Anonymous
2/09/2023 09:42 AM

For my most recent project, it had gone to SFDB, then was redesigned, so SFDB was looking at a somewhat different project at their second review. However, in order to achieve a very timely Final Approval, we worked closely with SFDB staff & staff planner

Anonymous
2/09/2023 11:26 AM

THE PLN PROCESS!!! SFDB Process is slow enough, but the PLN process add 4-6 months for every project.

Anonymous
2/09/2023 02:05 PM

over reaching requirements and not enough staff

Anonymous
2/09/2023 02:27 PM

The board generally has a negative outlook on any project, they should be there to assist the public and approach projects in a lets see how we can get this done manner. Instead they look for ways to complicate and slow down approvals

Anonymous
2/09/2023 02:21 PM

The City's incompetence and complete lack of understanding of budget of a single family homeowner just trying to make their house nicer and safer. Not everyone has a million dollars to fix their house.

Anonymous
2/09/2023 02:40 PM

Condo project and adjacent to proposed historical district

Anonymous

neighbors

2/09/2023 02:22 PM

Anonymous

2/09/2023 02:31 PM

The time for architect and landscape architect to re-do drawings took a lot of time and money.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 02:46 PM

The P&Z Dept has so many design demands that a homeowner can hardly change their mailbox color without triggering Design Review. More homeowner remodels should be done OTC

Anonymous

2/09/2023 02:45 PM

Extremely slow turnaround times by the County (due to personnel changes?).

Anonymous

2/09/2023 02:53 PM

Nit picking and requiring extensive detail around landscaping that we couldn't have possibly known at that stage

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:07 PM

The dysfunction of the agency and board members not being on the same page as one and another.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:02 PM

Unnecessary requirements for approval of project

Anonymous

2/10/2023 10:33 AM

Every project is dependent on client decisions, board comments, and timing of consultants. It depends.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 02:59 PM

lack of communication and documentation

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:02 PM

Lack of knowledge from staff

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:11 PM

not knowing the process as a new designer to the area. A spider web of codes and regulatory boards

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:09 PM

PERSONAL OPINIONS OF THE BOARD MEMBERS

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:23 PM

Subjective and unqualified demands by a few board members.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:25 PM

Unavailability of staff - one in particular was never available

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:37 PM

Frankly the biggest timeline item is selling the client on revisions that they don't feel they need make.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:20 PM

Staff shortage due to illness

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:29 PM

Was passed around

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:33 PM

Long lead times for approval, needed completeness before actionable items. City staff can just push off completeness of project to stall approvals from SFDB. SFDB needs to be streamlined and projects under 4,000 SF and two stories should be exempt.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:32 PM

Quality of submissions.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:42 PM

Having to return 2 times for a total of 3 hearings. And at hearing 2 or 3, dealing with brand new comments, or reversal of previous comments.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:40 PM

Competence of City Personnel

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:45 PM

One Arrogant Board member

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:40 PM

Making different required changes at each hearing, instead of all at once

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:42 PM

see prior notes. ive been at meetings and witness how resistance and difficult the SFDB is. the team should be much more agreeable and friendly, giving supportive solutions and examples. we should be encouraging this process, not make it feared or dislike

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:39 PM

Board difficulty in meeting quorum, large influx of project submittals, planners seem to be overbooked and taking a long time to get

through completeness review (required to get on SFDB agenda waitlist)

Anonymous

2/09/2023 04:41 PM

Lag between submitting and being scheduled for a hearing. SFDB had no availability to be seen earlier.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 04:19 PM

Onerous requests from the board, scheduling delays.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 04:05 PM

Covid?

Anonymous

2/09/2023 05:10 PM

Lack of prep by members. Added new / previously discussed items to meetings.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 05:11 PM

Bureaucracy bullshit

Anonymous

2/09/2023 05:17 PM

Lack of communication within

Anonymous

2/09/2023 05:56 PM

redesign

Anonymous

2/09/2023 05:48 PM

Backlog of projects being handled by staff

Anonymous

2/09/2023 07:01 PM

Return visits for ridiculously unnecessary items, requiring thousands of dollars of client money for no improvement to the design or the project.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 07:14 PM

too much grading drainage info

Anonymous

2/09/2023 07:18 PM

Project documentation and neighborhood outreach

Anonymous

2/09/2023 07:21 PM

Submittal process submittals through accelera, awaiting application completeness and generally not have access to planners in person.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 09:15 PM

Project was appealed.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 09:51 PM

Understaffed

Anonymous

2/09/2023 09:51 PM

No idea. Just lack of response despite repeated inquiries. It was absurd.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 10:10 PM

Over analysis and not understanding how to read plans.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 10:15 PM

Bureaucracy

Anonymous

2/09/2023 10:19 PM

Their schedule

Anonymous

2/09/2023 10:34 PM

Less bias and staff being helpful

Anonymous

2/09/2023 10:55 PM

Changes to the design

Anonymous

2/10/2023 03:42 AM

The city not understanding their own rules on R2 lots and historical restrictions. Also as-is drawings were inaccurate and had to be re-drawn for an additional architectural cost.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 04:36 AM

Comments that were subjective

Anonymous

2/10/2023 05:58 AM

Show how you meet all requirements on the drawings solar, setbacks, etc.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 07:38 AM

My ability to find time to rework the project.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 07:45 AM

The board gave conditional approval subject to a setback review, upon unanimous approval of the set back, the board president decided he wanted a different design and sent us away to address

his opinions (nothing was in conflict with the guidelines)

Anonymous

2/10/2023 08:09 AM

Plan changes are expensive to accomplish if architects are busy and allot of changes are requested

Anonymous

2/10/2023 07:59 AM

lack of efficiency of department

Anonymous

2/10/2023 08:09 AM

incompetent busybodies. The whole idea of a design board is a farce.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 08:18 AM

They approved my last project, a large one, at our first meeting and they were very supportive.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 08:42 AM

Following directions.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 08:55 AM

Their decisions are completely arbitrary and want complete control of the project.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 09:23 AM

Board inability to focus on their job, which is not to "design" the project, but to filter out the big offenders. They "hyper" focus on minutia and although it's fine to make suggestions, this shouldn't hold up projects. Staff review is way too long.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 09:34 AM

Working with a local architect

Anonymous

2/10/2023 09:51 AM

Board members personal bias

Anonymous

2/10/2023 09:49 AM

too many regulations; city turn around time from submittal to incomplete letter; excessive comments on plans

Anonymous

2/10/2023 09:57 AM

Unwilling to approve at the first hearing.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 10:17 AM

We have been long time owners and then became renovation applicants.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 10:21 AM

Covid

Anonymous

2/10/2023 10:18 AM

Delay in the Process of the original permit application.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 10:29 AM

good architect who knew the process

Anonymous

2/10/2023 10:57 AM

Unrealistic expectations

Anonymous

2/10/2023 11:23 AM

the long 30 day completeness review. We have to provide so much information just to get on the agenda.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 12:50 PM

The city did everything in its power to accommodate my project. The fact they are under staffed, and under a great deal of pressure these days, with a very large staff turnover rate, it's amazing anything gets done!

Anonymous

2/10/2023 01:16 PM

lack of experience employees that are reviewing project.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 02:37 PM

SFDB kept changing their minds and constantly asking for more. It was ridiculous!

Anonymous

2/10/2023 03:06 PM

Noticing and neighbor's threat of a spurious lawsuit as well as the two meeting requirement

Anonymous

2/10/2023 03:38 PM

Covid

Anonymous

2/10/2023 05:17 PM

Not enough staff, people not checking or seeing that something had been submitted that they said they were still waiting to receive. This whole process was so incredibly slow and felt so counterintuitive.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 06:29 PM

Constant mercurial interjections with each review being scheduled far out in the future

Anonymous

2/10/2023 07:48 PM

Inefficiency

Anonymous

2/10/2023 06:43 PM

Not enough employees working at the building department.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 08:13 PM

We spent a huge amount of time and money to derisk our plans. The derisk effort largely succeeded, but with a sad loss to project quality and value.

Anonymous

2/11/2023 09:32 AM

since meetings were online, I don't see any reason that it should have taken so long

Anonymous

2/11/2023 11:39 AM

Again if the Board reviewed & completed the design guideline checklist (recommended design features) and project plans checklists (required items) during the hearings, they would be more consistent, thorough and provide more constructive feedback earlier.

Anonymous

2/11/2023 06:20 PM

They had me make frivolous design changes

Anonymous

2/12/2023 05:55 AM

SFDB members rambling on during meetings hence there being less meeting time available for projects to be scheduled. SFDB members going out of purview.

Anonymous

2/12/2023 09:21 AM

Construction permit final approval and fees

Anonymous

2/12/2023 09:15 AM

Arbitrariness of certain Board members. No reason for project to be reviewed at that level - also an arbitrary decision by Planning staff

Anonymous

2/13/2023 07:52 AM

Time schedule and review

Anonymous

2/13/2023 11:51 AM

The board's opinions and storm water requirements.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 10:00 AM

The city has no idea what they are doing. Lot's of people involved in the process. Contractors that don't know the city requirements. Too

many people with no clue as to what is going on. Someone tried to tell us we would have to move our entire driveway!

Anonymous

2/13/2023 10:46 AM

cumbersome paperwork the city likes to issue

Anonymous

2/13/2023 10:59 AM

Requiring too many plan details - design review should be only based on exterior appearance, and building /engineering review then adds on structural, soil reports, etc.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 11:45 AM

A few single persons in Summerland are causing so much trouble for the rest...will not live and let live...dictate own opinions as if from the community...need to reassess Summerland situation!!

Anonymous

2/13/2023 12:11 PM

Multiple submissions based on changing personal preference of board members

Anonymous

2/13/2023 12:39 PM

Certain staff bias. A lack of standards. Allowance of board personal opinions and tastes to be used as a standard.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 12:51 PM

The need to go back to the board multiple times to review the same items, turnover on the board, cancelations of meeting

Anonymous

2/13/2023 01:16 PM

Lack of quorum, Board members having to step down because of conflict of interest. The PERSONAL opinions of the Board Members that may be based on a bias toward the applicant and Owner - not looking at the project objectively but pushing their own agenda

Anonymous

2/13/2023 01:19 PM

Problems scheduling during COVID, complete redesign due to unclear feedback from the SFDB, approval expected then not granted due to item (color) that was previously approved and then one member changed their mind and another new member didn't "like" it.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 01:28 PM

overreach, no one wanting to make a decision, untrust of homeowners, a culture of delay and make everything confusing

Anonymous

2/13/2023 02:56 PM

A very full calendar and the fact that our Landscape Architect is on the board, recused herself for our project and when another board member was sick (which happened twice to us) a quorum could not

be met. Our meetings were pushed back 2 months each time

Anonymous

2/13/2023 04:26 PM

Delays on behalf of city staff with processing our application. Your process is needless slow and overly bureaucratic.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 05:01 PM

Lack of open agendas, board members inconsistent comments, not receiving approval with comments and being required to resubmit with very minor alterations. i.e.. Entry gates needed to be curved instead of squared off.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 05:15 PM

Minor nit-picking comments that required us to keep coming back. New comments at every meeting after prior comments were addressed.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 06:16 PM

Staffing, response time, new staff that were uninformed. Santa Barbara is ridiculous with permitting both residential and commercial. The poor owners of the [REDACTED] that they can't get the permit for the new restaurant. It's crazy!

Anonymous

2/13/2023 08:31 PM

Covid was the stated reason.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 10:32 PM

Petty opinions creating a guessing game of what board will approve when I have houses similar to mine that were approved

Anonymous

2/14/2023 08:54 AM

The completeness review letter. Also, the amount of work that is being asked for on the plans at such early stages in design drawings are costing clients money.

Anonymous

2/14/2023 09:25 AM

too much talk

Anonymous

2/14/2023 10:29 AM

No clue. Availability? Staff dragging their feet? Staff nitpicking things that the design board couldn't believe they brought to them for review? All of the above? The process is glacial and absurd.

Anonymous

2/14/2023 01:22 PM

Scheduling backlog.

Anonymous

2/14/2023 02:39 PM

agendas were full and it took too long to get scheduled.

Anonymous

2/14/2023 02:38 PM

Multiple hearings

Anonymous

2/14/2023 02:54 PM

Every submittal has a review, then a wait to get on the next available agenda. Seems to be 2 to 3 months minimum between review hearings

Anonymous

2/14/2023 03:06 PM

Coastal project as well, but application review took far longer than expected, 30day review with a comment, another 30day review with another comment, another 30day review...

Anonymous

2/14/2023 03:48 PM

Having to go 3 times

Anonymous

2/14/2023 05:10 PM

Pandemic - file lost due as well as new coordinator hired and my file was not assigned, poor communications overall, in preparing SFDB file for application the process was incredibly slow to review all materials sufficiently to put in front of sFDB

Anonymous

2/14/2023 05:01 PM

Color pretty sketches and drawings.

Anonymous

2/15/2023 06:39 AM

No one seems to care that we are regular middle class people just trying to get a small project through. It seems the big construction companies and residents with deep projects get stuff through very fast. Very frustrated.

Anonymous

2/15/2023 06:58 AM

Subjectivity and inefficiency all along the way

Anonymous

2/15/2023 09:44 AM

The overall level of disorganization in the entire building & development office

Anonymous

2/15/2023 02:02 PM

I'm a past SFDB member, so I know how to navigate the process. I think many architects/designer try to ramrod their project through the process. Board members should vote to deny certain applications early in the process instead of giving poor input.p

Anonymous 2/15/2023 02:51 PM	confusion, local resistance, and city bias toward SB9 project approvals
Anonymous 2/15/2023 04:52 PM	Additional environmental reports required from Zoning, not SFDB
Anonymous 2/15/2023 03:05 PM	Too much review at the concept level
Anonymous 2/15/2023 06:22 PM	Staff reviews of submission. 6 or 7 year ago you walked up to the counter and they reviewed your application and drawings and they agenized you for the next available hearing (may have been 2 months out). Not it is 2 months to get a review letter.
Anonymous 2/15/2023 06:35 PM	Staff input/reports. Waiting to get on an agenda. Board members with opinions instead of factual, objective rationales for their findings.
Anonymous 2/15/2023 08:35 PM	Short staffing.
Anonymous 2/16/2023 08:02 AM	Staff review, unavailable agendas.
Anonymous 2/16/2023 09:15 AM	Have to go to hearing twice.
Anonymous 2/16/2023 12:54 PM	Incapable planning staff, board politics, open bias against the project
Anonymous 2/16/2023 03:19 PM	Planning Comments are the harder things to navigate and take the longest time. DART reviews are brutal in terms of time. SFDB is failry straight forward but the comments need to be grounded in previous precedent and actual design regulations
Anonymous 2/16/2023 07:27 PM	The insane application review process. The majority of info you request is unnecessary and has no bearing on whether an application should be deemed complete. What is you criteria? The expense has doubled w/o even knowing the viability of the project.

Anonymous

2/17/2023 03:23 PM

Incorrect interpretation of state law. Slow evaluation

Anonymous

2/18/2023 05:41 PM

Inefficiency. Items at issue could have been quickly handled offline but had to wait for future meetings. No meetings held during December, which is absurd.

Anonymous

2/19/2023 08:48 AM

New requests by committee on follow up public reviews.

Anonymous

2/19/2023 10:10 AM

No hand-drawn plans seemed acceptable (for electrical replacement/upgrade). Had to get the drawings done electronically.

Anonymous

2/19/2023 09:54 AM

no commentg

Anonymous

2/19/2023 10:29 AM

multi-site development with shared common area

Anonymous

2/19/2023 12:55 PM

Having consistent board comments from meeting. Clear understanding of neighborhood compatability

Anonymous

2/19/2023 04:02 PM

slow response from planning staff

Anonymous

2/19/2023 04:27 PM

the need for repeated hearings and several months of completeness letters and agendizing, then cancelled hearings

Anonymous

2/20/2023 10:35 AM

Inconsistency in design review comments and feedback such as board members approving FAR in one meeting and then back tracking the next. SFDB board inserting personal design opinion into the project and unrealistic detail specificity

Anonymous

2/20/2023 09:36 AM

It takes time to do everything

Anonymous

2/20/2023 10:35 AM

Suggestion(s) from one board member can hold up the majority of the approval process

Anonymous

2/20/2023 11:27 AM

Planners don't return phone calls. The City is consistently understaffed. Disorganizaition - deem applications complete and if incomplete be clear about requirements.

Anonymous

2/20/2023 12:42 PM

N/A

Anonymous

2/20/2023 12:38 PM

Bias against the project required extra meetings

Anonymous

2/20/2023 02:07 PM

Long wait times to get in front of the board. Actual review did not add much time to the project, it was just waiting to get in front of the board. If the board could have more hearings so projects could get feedback faster it would be appreciated

Anonymous

2/20/2023 02:31 PM

SFDB wanted to punish the property owner for making changes during construction

Anonymous

2/20/2023 04:03 PM

Design board requests for changes

Anonymous

2/20/2023 05:22 PM

30 day completeness review process, neighbor impact, hostility towards the project and design aesthetic desired by the client (contemporary)

Anonymous

2/20/2023 10:58 PM

Covid, staffing issues, communication difficulty.

Anonymous

2/20/2023 08:35 PM

personal opinions - boardmember opinions, public opinions

Anonymous

2/20/2023 09:02 PM

Since there were no guidelines, we went in with a beautifully designed home. It started out with all members say how lovely it was. Then it just got ripped for the next hour and half. Meetings kept get cancelled.

Anonymous

2/20/2023 10:46 PM

The staff did not notice the neighborhood because they said it was not necessary for our small scope of work. Later when a nosy neighbor asked why our project was not noticed, staff made us go back through the noticing process. This cost us two months.

Anonymous

2/21/2023 08:16 AM

lack of quorum / not able to get agenda items, lack of staff to process applications, delays at intake, neighbor outreach / comments

Anonymous

2/21/2023 01:04 PM

The SFDB is highly behind and it takes months to get on the calendar.

Anonymous

2/21/2023 12:13 PM

I experienced significant delays with the Planning review prior to SFDB.

Anonymous

2/21/2023 11:46 AM

No idea

Anonymous

2/21/2023 12:28 PM

A slow cumbersome bureaucratic process and inability to obtain an efficient review process

Anonymous

2/21/2023 01:39 PM

They hate modern architecture. The first comments we received was there "are no moderns on the Mesa." In our second hearing, they said "prove to us that there are moderns within five houses of either side of you." Not twenty per the guidelines.

Anonymous

2/21/2023 01:20 PM

Opinions of the board and neighbor comments that affected those opinions.

Anonymous

2/21/2023 02:22 PM

The design review board not having clear understanding of neighborhood compatibility building zoning design codes

Anonymous

2/21/2023 02:04 PM

The current process lumps together high quality applicants and applications that are very complete with other applicants and applications that are often incomplete, poorly designed and poorly executed. City should adopt a "grading" system to rank applica

Anonymous

2/21/2023 02:26 PM

3 SFDB reviews could be condensed down to 2 at max. I think we should be visiting planning and building as the first review and have them verify feasibility/ building perimeters are all acceptable.

Anonymous

2/21/2023 02:29 PM

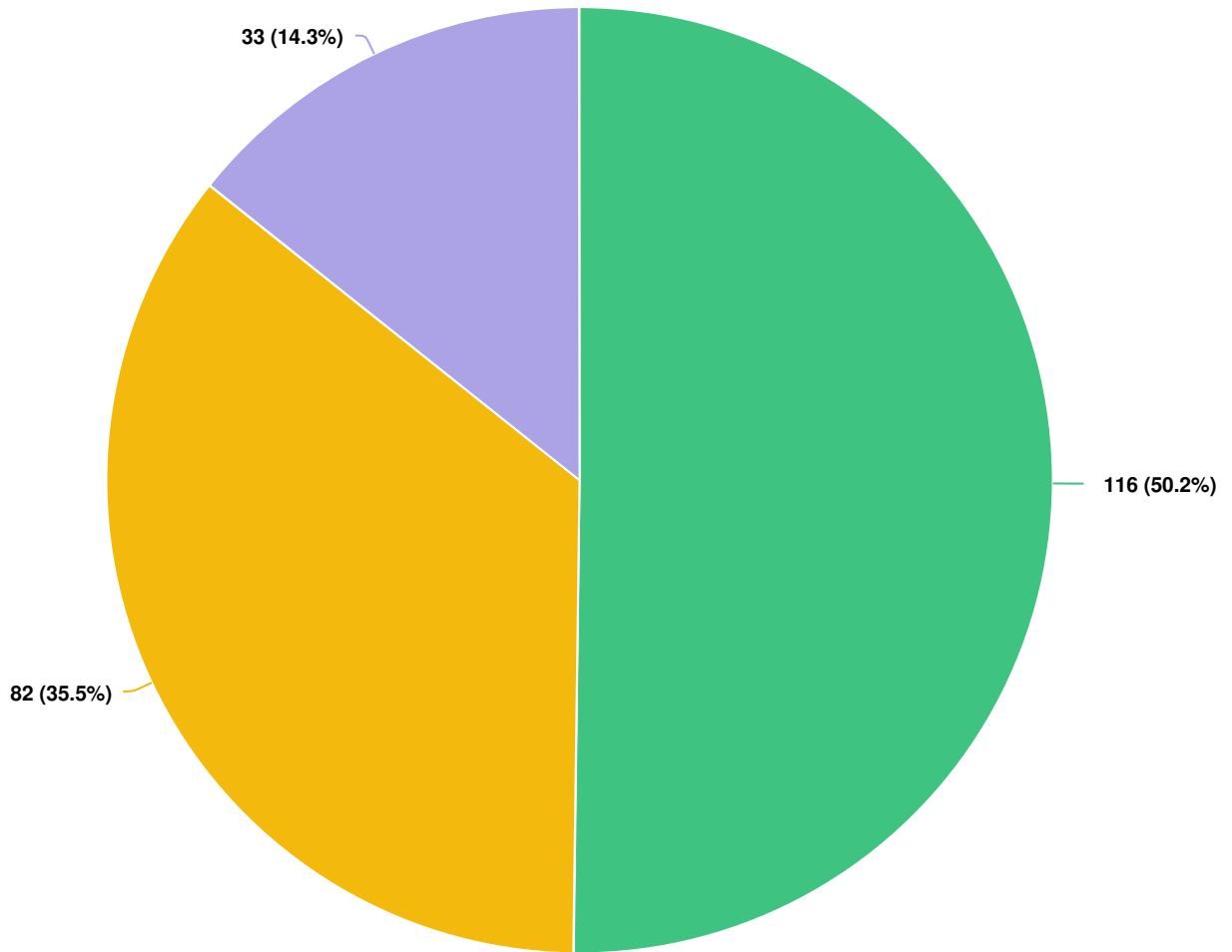
Lack of enough staff to review and prepare items, room on the agenda

- Anonymous
2/21/2023 04:54 PM
Subjective and inconsistent comments on design. Neighborhood opposition.
- Anonymous
2/21/2023 05:27 PM
Arbitrary approval process
- Anonymous
2/21/2023 07:10 PM
The boards objections were vague and so interpreting how to move forward is costly and time consuming
- Anonymous
2/21/2023 10:39 PM
full agendas/unclear deadlines and unnecessary continuances
- Anonymous
2/22/2023 05:42 AM
The board not liking the look of a standing seam metal roof
- Anonymous
2/22/2023 09:45 AM
The board agreed with most of the proposed elements of the project
- Anonymous
2/22/2023 11:19 AM
Responding to the detailed 30-day completeness review and impacted agendas.
- Anonymous
2/22/2023 10:57 AM
review time and waiting queue
- Anonymous
2/22/2023 12:36 PM
Extremely excessive drawing requirements from staff. It's shocking how far the overreach has become.

Optional question (181 response(s), 256 skipped)

Question type: Single Line Question

Q20 | It is common practice for me to share plans with neighbors before an initial hearing as part of my due diligence process?



Question options

- Yes
- No
- N/A

Mandatory Question (230 response(s))
Question type: Radio Button Question

Q21 | In your opinion, are there any types of residential projects that currently require SFDB review but you think should be exempt from a public hearing? Briefly describe the project scope and rationale for not needing a public hearing.

Anonymous

2/08/2023 05:18 PM

Existing houses over 17' tall with no changes to upper floor

Anonymous

2/08/2023 05:38 PM

no opinion

Anonymous

2/08/2023 05:49 PM

There should be objective standards for SFR and only projects that don't meet those standards should go in front of the board. This should be few and far between (like >85% FAR). It's absurd that things like storage additions that are not even visible tri

Anonymous

2/08/2023 07:14 PM

If a project complies with the appy zoning development standards , setback, height, FAR, etc. SFDB shoul not be required - waste of time & money

Anonymous

2/09/2023 11:26 AM

Small Additions (for example, ADUs - in ALL zones, garages, decks, etc.), Modifications should not go to SFDB for any reason especially setback mods on projects that were built under a prior ordinance, door/window replacement, exterior material changes.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 02:05 PM

ADU's

Anonymous

2/09/2023 02:21 PM

Yes - single family homeowners simply trying to remodel their house without the enourmous time and expense of the City process

Anonymous

2/09/2023 02:22 PM

yes. small projects, hillside or regular. let people add on and build one story houses within the guidelines. regular people dont have a lot of money

Anonymous

2/09/2023 02:31 PM

Projects that are less than or equal to 1000sf and do not alter setbacks or restrictions.

Anonymous

Window/door changes (these are already dictated by new

2/09/2023 02:46 PM

building/energy codes), additions under 700 sf, single story additions

Anonymous

2/09/2023 02:45 PM

Outdoor Kitchen that cannot be seen (or heard) by neighbors or from the street.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 02:53 PM

Residential neighborhoods should not be subjected to this process if it is a remodel or improvement. I understand needing that for additional dwelling or new builds but not on improvements of existing.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:07 PM

small storage buildings attached to main house, outdoor fire pit, drought tolerant landscaping.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:02 PM

Development of pre-existing structure

Anonymous

2/10/2023 10:33 AM

Pools. This should be a staff item. Needing to present a pool or accessory structure that is not visible from the street seems not necessary.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:04 PM

Technically I believe in the hillside area painting, garage door replacement, or pretty much anything exterior requires SFDB. No one gets approval so SFDB should accept that people are okay with that.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:23 PM

Fire loss home, which is what ours was. The delay in getting approval resulted in loss of valuable time and incurred increases in the construction costs.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:37 PM

I believe that any person who does not live very close or is not directly effected by the project should not be allowed to influence any board member just by being a squeaky wheel.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:20 PM

driveways

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:26 PM

Work at the back of the house or in the backyard...who cares?

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:33 PM

4,000 Gross SF and/or 85% FAR, two stories, conforms to all zoning heights/setbacks, no mods/variances should be exempt from design

review. A board of very few people should not dictate the design of a normal single family home.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:32 PM

Any single family dwelling that has similar footprint and profile as homes in the immediate neighborhood.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:42 PM

Projects that meet the FAR guideline and that do not have any mods.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:40 PM

Don't know

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:38 PM

Projects with greater than 16% slope but not visible from nearest street.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:45 PM

The criteria remain a mystery to me

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:40 PM

No

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:42 PM

I'm not sure of all the things that require SFDB. I would recommend and encourage you to find 25% less things that need SFDB, then spend that extra bandwidth being supportive and fast with new projects that do require SFDB.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 04:00 PM

Hillside Design District 20% slope & Vegetation Removal Permit

Anonymous

2/09/2023 04:41 PM

N/A

Anonymous

2/09/2023 04:19 PM

Design guidelines that can be complied to without needing a hearing. Many houses are small in Santa Barbara and doing modest remodels shouldn't require SFDB meetings. Current guidelines are too restrictive.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 04:05 PM

Interior work or work not visible from the public street.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 04:05 PM

Adding solar or ADU

Anonymous

2/09/2023 05:11 PM

Home remodels, landscaping, hardscapes

Anonymous

2/09/2023 05:56 PM

projects that meet or exceed an objective design criteria. Architects should be given a much higher level of respect for their work.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 06:00 PM

small remodels should be exempt, as long as they adhere to design guidelines

Anonymous

2/09/2023 07:01 PM

We were required to get design review for rain barrels at a residence. I don't even see where this is listed as something triggering design review, but WE had to go through SFDB for it. Those water saving improvements never happened as a result.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 07:14 PM

no

Anonymous

2/09/2023 08:46 PM

The public hearing process is deeply flawed. Feedback only comes from the residents who have the to time and money and who oppose the project

Anonymous

2/09/2023 09:15 PM

Pools that are not in setbacks, on grade, and screened at the property line.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 09:51 PM

Exterior siding, windows should be exempt from any hearing.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 09:51 PM

Hot tub / BBQ installation. Interior wall remodeling. Interior electrical circuits. None of these have any public effect.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 10:10 PM

All. Very counterproductive and patronizing to architects in the community. Some board members don't know the difference between planning ord. and building codes.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 10:15 PM

Any additions to an existing house should be considered at the planning office, any size of addition

Anonymous

2/09/2023 10:19 PM

If it's not affecting anyone's views, not encroaching or not in the ocean district

Anonymous

2/10/2023 03:42 AM

No

Anonymous

2/10/2023 04:36 AM

No. Just remove more of the opinions in the process

Anonymous

2/10/2023 07:31 AM

most sfr's

Anonymous

2/10/2023 07:45 AM

I am not familiar with the types of projects that require approvals of the SFDB - our project involved building outside improvements including a patio, BBQ area and pool

Anonymous

2/10/2023 08:09 AM

A project on a large lot where impacts are minimal or highly unlikely to adjoining properties.. More projects that can be approved by Planning staff that are clearly conforming with guidelines

Anonymous

2/10/2023 08:09 AM

incompetent busybodies with a personal need for self aggrandizement & self importance

Anonymous

2/10/2023 08:18 AM

There should be exemptions for projects under a certain size and cost of construction and of course if the improvements have no visual impacts to the neighborhood it should not require a design review.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 08:42 AM

Yes, adjacent properties not affected by line of sight issues. Addition to or new outbuilding (of a certain size) within a SFD property that poses no impacts to an adjacent property given a minimum property line distance.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 08:55 AM

If the project cannot be seen from the street, why should the SFDB be involved at all?

Anonymous

2/10/2023 09:23 AM

Small projects, material changes, non-visible projects from public. So many!

Anonymous

2/10/2023 09:17 AM

N/A

Anonymous

2/10/2023 09:34 AM

Depending on the size and scope of the project. There should be a fast-track for smaller simpler projects.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 09:51 AM

Homes not located in design significant neighborhoods should be able to have staff review the findings and receive approval through the planning process.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 09:49 AM

Yes, minor renovations / pool additions

Anonymous

2/10/2023 10:17 AM

Very small site or residential projects, perhaps under a stipulated cap, should be allowed without approvals.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 10:21 AM

It's hard to say . We were a little surprised that our railing design (not basic code requirements) would need approval and that the committee would be able to approve (or not) such things as color, etc. Look at our neighborhood - nothing matches.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 10:18 AM

Window/Door Change Outs, This should be a decision of the homeowner not the neighbor.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 10:29 AM

none

Anonymous

2/10/2023 10:57 AM

New SFDs, remodels and additions - the process is too complicated and onerous

Anonymous

2/10/2023 11:57 AM

Most - unless it substantially changes the character or impedes someone else's property.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 12:50 PM

The city site already accommodates this issue quite clearly

Anonymous

2/10/2023 01:16 PM

depend of the project

Anonymous

2/10/2023 02:37 PM

I am fine with a REASONABLE review

Anonymous

2/10/2023 03:06 PM

All ADUs and JADUs given that the Board's findings do not reflect state law requirements and may result in a lawsuit. SFDB should not be eliminated or at least not employed for any project adding residential units or bedrooms to streamline housing.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 03:43 PM

I don't believe that the City should be reviewing single family homes for design

Anonymous

2/10/2023 06:29 PM

Anything that is within the setbacks should not need review.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 06:43 PM

Replacing old materials already existing at location with new upgraded like materials should not require design review. Also, new windows have nothing to do with living on a hill!!

Anonymous

2/10/2023 08:13 PM

Anything which is not visible from the street. Only neighbors with compliant homes should be heard.

Anonymous

2/11/2023 11:39 AM

Projects that are not visible from the street and do not have the potential to impact views of neighbors.

Anonymous

2/11/2023 06:20 PM

Yes, people who live down private driveways (like us).

Anonymous

2/12/2023 05:55 AM

All projects. Design review bodies such as SFDB ultimately cost the city and its residents' time and money. Time and money that could be spent addressing the city's housing needs.

Anonymous

2/12/2023 09:21 AM

Projects that are not too visual from main road or streets , when neighborhood have the need to upgrade home for better residential value

Anonymous

2/12/2023 09:15 AM

Any project that does not increase the FAR and those that do not use "prohibited" material, i.e., vinyl windows etc.

Anonymous

2/12/2023 10:54 PM

No project should be exempt.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 11:51 AM

none

Anonymous

2/13/2023 10:46 AM

Yes, I had a reroof in a location where no one could see the roof, save for a hang glider or helicopter, A decently educated or experience staff member should have been able to label the project exempt.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 10:59 AM

ADUs on existing home that is to be exact same exterior as existing house.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 11:45 AM

Our plans were done and approved and built; additional landscaping done BEFORE new neighbors moved in...NEW neighbors should not be able to retroactively fight EXISTING plans or landscape

Anonymous

2/13/2023 11:52 AM

i think this is working ok

Anonymous

2/13/2023 12:11 PM

Yes, most of them

Anonymous

2/13/2023 12:39 PM

Anything that is a minor upgrade and/or minor addition should be exempt.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 12:51 PM

Existing non-conforming. Small square footage updates.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 01:16 PM

If the proposed project is very small and applicant receives positive feedback from neighbors in written form, the applicant should be able to meet with the Chair and the project be reviewed under consent.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 01:28 PM

Anything lower than two stories and not in the setbacks. Why don't you trust property owners? We are treated like children. It's ridiculous.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 02:56 PM

I do not know how far reaching their authority goes with remodels.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 04:26 PM

Home additions.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 05:01 PM

Remodel Projects that meet all current zoning requirements. Projects should only be required to go to an SFDB hearing if they are appealed by neighbors or are ground up residential projects.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 05:15 PM

All single story homes, and two story homes with less than 20% of floor area on second floor.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 06:16 PM

Front porches, small enclosures, patios, hardscape

Anonymous

2/13/2023 08:31 PM

Projects not substantially changing characteristics or size and or style of building

Anonymous

2/13/2023 10:32 PM

Fencing

Anonymous

2/14/2023 08:54 AM

Projects that change the roof color or material and site walls in front yard setback

Anonymous

2/14/2023 09:25 AM

SFDB has a purpose, make it user friendly.

Anonymous

2/14/2023 10:29 AM

ADUs should be exempt from the process

Anonymous

2/14/2023 01:22 PM

Properties that are not visible from the street or neighbors.

Anonymous

2/14/2023 02:39 PM

Projects below 85% FAR that meet all solar and neighborhood compatibility findings could be reviewed administratively. Projects in hillside regions or other overlay zones would still need design review.

Anonymous

2/14/2023 02:54 PM

When a second story window is being moved as part of an interior remodel (was 6 sq ft in location A, will now be 6 or less sq ft in location B), without any additions to the footprint or exterior massing.

Anonymous

2/14/2023 03:06 PM

The hillside overlay automatic kicker seems a bit harsh, should be comiserate with the project scope, not location

Anonymous

2/14/2023 03:48 PM

Small 2 story additions that comply with zoning codes

Anonymous

2/14/2023 03:46 PM

Yes, minor improvements, architectural enrichment

Anonymous

2/14/2023 05:01 PM

One Story less than 2,500 sf and less than 20' and top of plate less than 12' from finish floor.

Anonymous

2/15/2023 06:39 AM

Projects like ours that are small and in our private back yard hidden from neighbors and the street, As ling as they meet height requirements and fall within the setback.

Anonymous

2/15/2023 06:58 AM

If a project meets certain design criteria determined by the city that fit with the goals of our city, place the burden of the homeowner to check off those items and have the approval process be quick and easy

Anonymous

2/15/2023 09:44 AM

No

Anonymous

2/15/2023 02:02 PM

unsure

Anonymous

2/15/2023 02:51 PM

SB9 lot splits. As long as a lot meets the minimum state law requirements it is not legally up for debate or require a public hearing.

Anonymous

2/15/2023 04:52 PM

No. I believe in the hearing process so long as the board can understand the zoning and have a clear reference for when good design is presented, or not, Avoiding efforts to make neighbors happy at the cost of the prop. owner, and understanding guidelines

Anonymous

2/15/2023 06:22 PM

Desks. Any project that is in substernal confirming with existing.

Anonymous

Many homeowners would like to make minor upgrades on their

2/15/2023 06:35 PM

homes incrementally so as to make it more affordable. There is currently no pathway for homeowners to do this themselves. If permits were easier to obtain, more people would get them.

Anonymous

2/16/2023 08:02 AM

Yes, if the FAR is conforming (<85%), I think all residential projects should be exempt. Maybe there's a mechanism of noticing neighbors - and if neighbors want SFDB, then it goes to the full board.

Anonymous

2/16/2023 09:15 AM

Breezeway removal in between a detached garage and a residence. The existing breezeway was converted into a laundry room with access from (e) residence. A very straight forward project with no additional changes, and aesthetics matching like-for-like.

Anonymous

2/16/2023 03:19 PM

I think the requirements for a public hearing are currently fair and make sense from a design review standpoint. I do not feel that DART is needed in the way it is currently mandated on the MESA as an example.

Anonymous

2/16/2023 07:27 PM

A site wall greater than 42" in the front yard nor a lot line adjustment. Both of those can be handled by staff.

Anonymous

2/19/2023 09:54 AM

no comment

Anonymous

2/19/2023 10:29 AM

No, fine with current requirements but consider a less costly update process in course of construction-- or a less costly "common sense" appeal process when 1 expert consulting on the project has a myopic perspective based on assigned requirements..

Anonymous

2/19/2023 12:55 PM

small projects which could be reviewed by two member consent, not full board

Anonymous

2/19/2023 04:02 PM

minor modifications

Anonymous

2/19/2023 04:27 PM

ADUs that remain within size/ height limits should not trigger SFDB when in hillside areas, roof changes, if all structures exceed 4000sf, modular construction is proposed, etc... - we should end all SFDB review except for projects seeking modifications.

Anonymous

2/20/2023 10:35 AM

I believe in the SFDB review but the review parameters need to be fixed and not left up to personal opinion. The board yields power over FAR and minor design decisions and that shouldn't happen.

Anonymous

2/20/2023 09:36 AM

We should decide to reduce the number of projects going to SFDB by 75% and reduce any requirements necessary to meet that goal. Only use it for the most impactful projects.

Anonymous

2/20/2023 10:35 AM

Smaller projects not visible from the public street, door and window replacement, change of exterior materials and colors. Some homes in hill side district that the site is mostly flat.

Anonymous

2/20/2023 11:27 AM

Small projects like fencing, material changes, and even small projects that push FAR over guidelines if single story.

Anonymous

2/20/2023 12:42 PM

all projects should be spared the subjective design review process. it is inherently flawed and treats property owners, design professionals and communities unfairly by definition.

Anonymous

2/20/2023 12:38 PM

Small projects that do not add to second story and are under 14' height would seem reasonable to go through the process without review.

Anonymous

2/20/2023 02:07 PM

Multi-family housing that follows a 'form-based' code. Often these projects get torpedoed by NIMBYs just because they have more than one living unit; and their design 'criticism' is merely a cover for opposition to the project for adding more housing.

Anonymous

2/20/2023 02:04 PM

Solar project on coastlines. The solar modules do not weight that much and it should require a specific study to prove that the extra weight will make the cliff collapse

Anonymous

2/20/2023 05:22 PM

Many of the smaller "Walls and Balconies" triggers could be handled administratively

Anonymous

2/20/2023 10:58 PM

Remodels should be allowed up to 85% of FAR without review. Notices should be sent to neighbors but if there is no overwhelming negative feedback, board approval should not be required.

Anonymous

2/20/2023 08:35 PM

Any project that meets building or zoning codes should not require a hearing.

Anonymous

2/20/2023 10:46 PM

Simple projects should be able to be streamlined.

Anonymous

2/21/2023 08:16 AM

parking exceptions should be removed from design review, quantify an amount of grading associated on a vacant lot in a single-family zone (how the Hillside Design District is listed). quantify the amount of vegetation removed which triggers design review

Anonymous

2/21/2023 09:08 AM

How about projects that are not asking for any discretionary approval, that meet all planning requirements for height, setback, FAR, etc. are exempt from design review.

Anonymous

2/21/2023 01:04 PM

ADUs

Anonymous

2/21/2023 12:00 PM

Project improvements that are not within view from public, landscape renovations

Anonymous

2/21/2023 11:46 AM

Renovations that don't alter the home in a significant way

Anonymous

2/21/2023 12:28 PM

Any projects would comply with planning regulations

Anonymous

2/21/2023 01:39 PM

The SFDB should not be regulating window size and modern architecture. The Mesa should not be regulated by the SFDB and public hearing. We submitted twenty letters of support in our public here and a member said he didn't care" what the neighbors said.

Anonymous

2/21/2023 01:20 PM

In general, less projects should be required to go through this process.

Anonymous

2/21/2023 02:22 PM

No one likes change . No one wants the space to be altered . But anyone has the write to do what they wish in there space within reason . So I guess the question is what's within reason . Each city has to define there pentameters but they need to be clea

Anonymous

2/21/2023 02:04 PM

minor remodels

Anonymous

2/21/2023 02:29 PM

For in kind replacements with similar style, evidence of meetings with affected neighbors MAY be enough

Anonymous

2/21/2023 04:54 PM

One story residences, additions less than 40% of the original home, ADU's, projects that comply with objective zoning standards and general design guidelines.

Anonymous

2/21/2023 05:27 PM

No! Santa Barbara is beautiful & architecture should be too!

Anonymous

2/22/2023 05:42 AM

Reroofing in general. I think the staff review should be sufficient.

Anonymous

2/22/2023 09:45 AM

minor remodel work

Anonymous

2/22/2023 11:19 AM

Yes, remodels and minor additions for homes outside the HDD. There are too many minor improvements that trigger SFDB, wall height, grading for a pool and therefore outside the main building footprint, a window change for an existing two-story element.

Anonymous

2/22/2023 10:57 AM

I believe all residential projects below 4 units should be exempt from review. Design professionals should have the freedom with the homeowner to develop the property how they see fit. Most of the time design review board is less qualified than the arch

Anonymous

2/23/2023 12:30 PM

Small additions with no modifications may be exempted. Projects that directly impact neighbors should not.

Optional question (153 response(s), 284 skipped)

Question type: Single Line Question

Q22 | **If you could change one thing related to the SFDB design review process what would it be? Please answer in a sentence or two, 255 character max.**

Anonymous

2/08/2023 05:18 PM

Allow maximum freedom of design, as long as the project meets minimum standards. Do not ask for "the highest level of design".

Anonymous

2/08/2023 05:38 PM

The single biggest improvement might be for the city to have a city architect, who understands what issues a design review board might have and vets projects before the applicant it too far along.

Anonymous

2/08/2023 05:49 PM

Dramatically reduce the preview of the SFDB and limit the number of board members

Anonymous

2/08/2023 07:14 PM

Minimize the triggers for review.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 04:39 AM

Staff needs more training; board members need orientation to their roles and training, chair person is critical and should know how to run a meeting and what the ordinance and guidelines state so that they can organize and guide discussion for applicant

Anonymous

2/09/2023 09:42 AM

To limit the SFDB to comments strictly within their purview.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 11:26 AM

The PLN process should be removed for Single Family Projects. It is not needed there. SFDB should have the ability to provide PDA approval whenever they want. If land use is lagging, so what. Keep the project moving through the process faster.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 02:27 PM

change the boards negative attitude towards development, less emphasis on neighbors negative public comments who just dont want any change

Anonymous

2/09/2023 02:21 PM

For it to take 2 months or less, not 2 years. Not sending families to historical review, not caring about the color of gravel or exactly which shade of white

Anonymous

2/09/2023 02:40 PM

Speed

Anonymous

2/09/2023 02:22 PM

only review large houses.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 02:31 PM

Include in checklist that the building permit application can be started at the same time as LUP process.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 02:46 PM

shorter wait times to get on an agenda, clearer directions to applicants, allow deferrals to staff for ministerial review

Anonymous

2/09/2023 02:45 PM

Courtesy Inspections to begin work before Permit Card is issued.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 02:53 PM

Remove it all together -this didn't make the project 'better' it just created extra work, time and money to make them feel important

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:07 PM

SFSB staff to clearly describe there comment and not add new comments at every hearing.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:02 PM

No comment

Anonymous

2/10/2023 10:33 AM

NA

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:04 PM

Process should just be size bulk and scale not personal taste. It should not be about the minutia of the design. Board members have arbitrarily redefined neighborhood at times to be the property adjacent to the subject. That's not fair.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:02 PM

It seems mama making big decisions don't even live in our area yet they have very strong opinions. It would be nice to hire people that own homes and live in the area.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:11 PM

I believe the system although original set in place to benefit the local community and homeowners has become a burden on homeowners to develop or improve their homes. Only to further create increased home cost and increased home values that are too high.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:23 PM

Remove individual who do not fallow the SB guidelines and who are subjective egotists who are on a power trip.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:25 PM

Collaboration. [REDACTED] would not listen to the reasons for the choice of materials. She was never available, gone for weeks at a time and uncooperative. I will never permit any project again bc of my horrible experience.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:37 PM

Have the board regulate construction quality and really bad design only. Style should not be a factor. What this City needs is high quality design and construction, not regulation of style.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:20 PM

The review process seemed to be consistent with the deadlines given on accelera other than when someone was sick - totally understandable, and did not affect the timeline much. All staff was very responsive and supportive.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:33 PM

Other than exempt projects, two hearing max. per project and actionable determinations at each hearing. Concept is first, then PDA. No final. Building Dept. sends plans to planner for conformance with PDA approval. Remove barriers = less architectural fee

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:32 PM

Make sure that all the members of the board are qualified to participate in the review process. In my experience many were not.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:42 PM

SFBD members should not pretend they are the project architect. Saying things like, "I feel like it should be..." should be verboten. Projects either meet te standards or they don't. As for interpretation of guidelines, ties go to the applicant.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:40 PM

Increased competence and experience of examiner

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:38 PM

Leave out personal design preferences and give clear directions for approvable concepts

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:45 PM

Require that Board members serve the interests of both the applicants and the community.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:40 PM

Take personal opinions out of the process. Stick to code specific modifications

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:42 PM

See previous comments, look for places to substract and look how to change the orientation of the SFDB to be very encouraging, solution oriented and extremely time sensitive, the carry cost for homeowners, builders etc is a lot.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 03:39 PM

Increased professionalism of board members, a limit to the number of years that board members are allowed to serve, increased training of board members on their actual purview

Anonymous

2/09/2023 04:41 PM

The city should revise their design guidelines to be what will actually pass. ie) current guidelines allow a building to be 30' tall, but we all know that SFDB will not let you build anything that tall.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 04:19 PM

Change thresholds of requiring a SFDB design review. Some board members and chairs seem unqualified and/or have conflicts of interest.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 04:05 PM

The process needs to be simple and helpful more of a guide. Owners should not be forced to make changes they do not want.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 05:10 PM

Reduce delays due to landscape reiew.s.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 05:11 PM

Give permits over the counter!!!

Anonymous

2/09/2023 05:17 PM

Learn from SLO county . Not so homogeneous

Anonymous

2/09/2023 05:56 PM

I would revert to utilization of an objective design criteria. The SFDB should only be utilized if the design is outside of those standards. Each iteration costs the client and architect time and money to the point of projects not being feasible.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 05:48 PM

Too many extra regulations/concessions added to project (storm water upgrades and similar)

Anonymous

2/09/2023 06:00 PM

too much egocentric and subjective discussion

Anonymous

2/09/2023 07:01 PM

SIMPLIFY. In the 90s design review was useful; now it is just a complex expensive bureaucratic nightmare that scares clients off and terminates good basic projects due to cost and capricious jud

Anonymous

2/09/2023 07:14 PM

all projects and adu should go thh

Anonymous

2/09/2023 07:18 PM

Change guidelines to rules

Anonymous

2/09/2023 08:46 PM

Remove public hearings

Anonymous

2/09/2023 09:15 PM

Board made up of members versed in landscape and architecture professions and capable of accurately reading drawings.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 09:51 PM

The rules need to be easier to understand. Staff needs to be informed. More staff needed.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 09:51 PM

Get rid of it when it's clearly unnecessary.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 10:10 PM

Discontinue and implement design review guidelines that staff can administer.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 10:15 PM

It should have a limit, let see 30 days since presented to the planning department, 45 days sounds reasonable

Anonymous

2/09/2023 10:19 PM

Shorter time frames, less restrictions

Anonymous

2/09/2023 10:34 PM

Ensure that everyone including myself have the same guidelines and rules in order to create certainty. Have a process and you will not have so many builders, developers, families upset with the process.

Anonymous

2/09/2023 10:55 PM

If a Project meets guidelines no public hearing is needed.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 03:42 AM

We can't all have luxury homes and those who live in lower income neighborhoods are trying to improve their homes for health, safety, environmental, and livability reasons. Some homes in the city just need updating and it is difficult to do that legally.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 04:36 AM

Eliminate the opinions

Anonymous

2/10/2023 07:31 AM

hard time limits on the process

Anonymous

2/10/2023 07:38 AM

I am not convinced SFDB enhances the quality of projects. Maybe eliminate SFDB.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 07:45 AM

That they stick to the process of determining if the plans conform to the guidelines. They should not be re-designing the projects as they want

Anonymous

2/10/2023 08:09 AM

Remove projects from SFDB agendas that do not need architectural scrutiny. Revise triggers to catch less projects and incentivize property owners to design projects in positive or less impactful ways to avoid design review process.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 07:59 AM

maintain the integrity of the neighborhood, i.e. size/style of homes, culture and peacefulness of neighborhood and protection of existing neighbors views

Anonymous

2/10/2023 08:09 AM

abolish it

Anonymous

2/10/2023 08:18 AM

Two year term limits on board members and more recruitment of new faces for the board. It's frustrating that the same people dominate the board for too long.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 08:42 AM

More open and focused on the design intent.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 08:55 AM

Dissolve it entirely

Anonymous

2/10/2023 09:23 AM

We need a "yes" mentality and generally a "let's move this project forward" mentality. It's the opposite.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 09:17 AM

First meeting should lay out all changes required and document them in minutes, then subsequent meetings should work through the minutes and check them off as resolved. This avoids new items added to avoid never ending review cycles.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 09:34 AM

The committee should be made up of nonpolitical professionals that are focused on architectural aspects with an open mind to our changing world architectural design.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 09:25 AM

I am a neighbor, not an applicant. The SFDB process is largely skewed in favor of the developers. The fact that there is no way to enter comments as a person attending without a project underscores that fact.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 09:51 AM

Discipline or removal of board members that are demeaning and rude to the applicants, ignore meeting protocol, and step outside of the guidelines and deny or sway members due to personal bias.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 09:49 AM

Having less required to get in front of the board for initial review and being able to meet with planners in person.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 09:57 AM

Arbitrary opinions of the board on project design.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 10:17 AM

When we applied for approval, five copies of our plans were required (costly at \$100 per set.)

Anonymous

2/10/2023 10:21 AM

It is always intimidating. You work hard and spend money to design an improvement for your house and it always feels like your tastes are being judged by the SFDB. You don't really get a chance to interact in a meaningful way.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 10:18 AM

Clear handouts on what is approved and not going to be approved.

Anonymous

The checklist I was asked to complete is written in industry terms and

2/10/2023 10:20 AM

not easily understandable by a homeowner, even a short layman explanation of the requirements as part of the checklist would be super helpful.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 10:29 AM

give options

Anonymous

2/10/2023 10:57 AM

streamline and reduce oversight. Create objective design standards

Anonymous

2/10/2023 11:23 AM

The review process should stick to size bulk and scale. The board should not ask for a complete structural, mechanical and electrical to get SFDB Final.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 11:57 AM

Make it lightning fast.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 12:50 PM

That it get better respect, a better understanding of the historical nature of why it exists at all. Santa Barbara is not a normal city. If people don't want to play by its rule there are PLENTY of communities without design review!

Anonymous

2/10/2023 01:16 PM

Replace management, improve lead time of review

Anonymous

2/10/2023 02:37 PM

Change their mentality, they think they are gods. We all have our opinions. If you ask me to critique the Arlington Theater, there are things that I would have done differently, but it was built and it's still beautiful. SFDB needs to calm down

Anonymous

2/10/2023 03:06 PM

The Board's discretion should be constrained to items that would otherwise require a permit and discretion/findings clearly delineated for the Board and Public.

Anonymous

2/10/2023 03:09 PM

Do away with neighborhood compatibility

Anonymous

2/10/2023 03:43 PM

I would eliminate it for everything except Modifications

Anonymous

2/12/2023 12:11 PM

Allow email responses to the accounting form in re project costs;
have expanded hours for form drop off at Garden street

Anonymous

2/13/2023 11:51 AM

I don't agree that every house on the block should look the same.
Good architecture speaks for itself.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 10:00 AM

The city has no right to decide a homeowners design. If I want black window frames and the design review says they should be rubbed bronze that's crazy. They are close enough the homeowner should be able to pick their own materials within reason.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 10:46 AM

Have staff that can and will make simple decision instead of funneling everything to the review board. Seems to be a catch-all or money maker.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 10:59 AM

Eliminate the Hillside review portion, most of SB is on a hillside!

Anonymous

2/13/2023 11:45 AM

Need to re-evaluate Summerland input! Ortega Ranch HOA Architecture Committee does not support restricting beige color! [REDACTED] should NOT be dictating, bullying, threatening all neighbors! Chair of architecture committee, willing to focus group

Anonymous

2/13/2023 11:52 AM

having members that are architectural trained. removing the bias toward architectural style of members. Application of the hard FAR 85% bias

Anonymous

2/13/2023 12:11 PM

Speed up the process significantly and only require changes that are clear in the guidelines, not personal design choices

Anonymous

2/13/2023 12:39 PM

A universally accepted standard in writing that SFDB must adhere to.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 12:51 PM

Abolish the whole board. Any design review should be purely objective, completed by city employees who can be held accountable for their decisions.

Anonymous

Time it takes to get on an agenda.

2/13/2023 01:02 PM

Anonymous

2/13/2023 01:16 PM

Board members should be REASONABLE. Multiple reviews are damaging to the timeline and budget of every Project. Board members must be thorough in the very first review and not be allowed to add additional concerns in subsequent reviews.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 01:19 PM

Most of the board members were not very nice, had strong personal opinions that we felt were out of the scope of the boards jurisdiction. The whole process was frustrating, expensive, stressful and traumatic. It was a HORRIBLE process.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 01:28 PM

Too slow and too inconsistent. Some projects just green light right through and others are tied up for years. Just trust property owners, make the process easy. Go look at cities that do it right -- copy them.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 02:56 PM

Process needs streamlining. Board members need to be reminded of what they are and aren't legally allowed to influence.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 04:26 PM

Your staff were needlessly slow with all aspects of the review process. This is unacceptable--my taxes pay your salaries.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 05:01 PM

they should only be reviewing projects in regards their mass, bulk, and scale from the public view. not in relation to protecting neighbor views or catering to neighbor desires. Additionally, the SFDB should put preference of one arch style above others

Anonymous

2/13/2023 05:15 PM

No new comments after prior comments have been addressed. Moreover, 100% FAR should be allowed all the time.

Anonymous

2/13/2023 06:16 PM

Santa Barbara has to approve residential and commercial properties in a timely manner. People go broke trying to get their projects through to beautify this town. Businesses go out of business waiting for their permits. Downtown is a ghost town!

Anonymous

2/13/2023 08:31 PM

Rational fee schedule and timeline. The process left me thinking that maybe selling and buying a house that fit my current needs better would have been more cost effective and less stressful

Anonymous

2/13/2023 10:32 PM

Be prepared, concise, and if want a chsnge then state what it will approve instead of making architect owner guess so it doesn't create a 3-4th meeting. Focus on large projects not a simple house improvement project

Anonymous

2/14/2023 08:54 AM

The projects should be reviewed for mass, bulk and scale. The reviews have gotten well beyond that. Too much personal design opinion. And too much information is being asked for at an early design stage

Anonymous

2/14/2023 09:25 AM

make it faster

Anonymous

2/14/2023 10:29 AM

The staff that slow walks everything, multiple times, before handing it off to the design board

Anonymous

2/14/2023 01:22 PM

Fear that personal bias will form the outcome. There should be an easy appeals process.

Anonymous

2/14/2023 02:39 PM

Planner and agenda timelines are too long- more staff should be hired as needed to accommodate the workload. More projects can be reviewed administratively or on the consent calendar. Average time for approval should be reduced to 4 months.

Anonymous

2/14/2023 02:54 PM

Would love to be allowed to submit (even at owner's/applicant's risk) to the building department prior to receiveing Final SFDB approval.

Anonymous

2/14/2023 03:06 PM

The lead up, being the inhouse staff review. I think the benchmark for an application to be determined complete is too in depth

Anonymous

2/14/2023 03:46 PM

Make it less arduous, eliminate the small pedantic comments. Most people are just trying to make their house a home, and lot of the rules and comments are unnecessary, and actually a little mean.

Anonymous

2/14/2023 05:10 PM

Better trained staff and timely responsive. Total 9 months to deliver 20 letters to neighbors, then told to send via registered mail to 20 homeowners including drawing and workshop at my home to explain project. Only person that showed up was my architect

Anonymous

2/14/2023 05:01 PM

One or two members shouldn't sway the board to their position. [REDACTED] was worthless naysayer. [REDACTED] was a continued mistake as an opinioned Professor who only knew his way. [REDACTED] was opinioned but was OK with it not being his style.

Anonymous

2/15/2023 06:39 AM

Time and high cost of it takes to get things through. It seems the costs are arbitrary especially in relation to size of projects. We need a more efficient process. Please approve and permit my project please. Its 2+ years.We have done all asked.

Anonymous

2/15/2023 06:58 AM

With better defined guidelines for approval, homeowners/architects/etc. can receive approval in 3 months or less.

Anonymous

2/15/2023 09:44 AM

Expedite the process

Anonymous

2/15/2023 12:48 PM

Reduce the triggers for requiring SFDB review

Anonymous

2/15/2023 02:02 PM

Compensate board members for their time. That's one reason is been hard to get qualified candidates.

Anonymous

2/15/2023 02:51 PM

fast track SB9 lot split permits if they meet the minimum state law requirements.

Anonymous

2/15/2023 04:52 PM

filter neighbor comments to those that truly are within the zoning pervue. Stop letting neighbors rule the meeting comments. The board exercise its knowledge of good design to allow things that people are fighting against because they dont want change

Anonymous

2/15/2023 03:05 PM

Make is easier to get conceptual review with concept level plans. Detailed compliance should come later.

Anonymous

2/15/2023 06:22 PM

Eliminate the 30 review letter for initial reviews. We wouldn't need everything figured out for conceptual or preliminary review. We can have more of a dialogues with the board if we get their feedback early, now we need it ready for permit before review.

Anonymous

Fewer triggers for SFDB review. It should only be for new homes, or

2/15/2023 06:35 PM

remodels where the size of the home is increasing by 50% or exceeding the max FAR.

Anonymous

2/16/2023 08:02 AM

Turnaround time, more combined approvals. More approvals on consent.

Anonymous

2/16/2023 09:15 AM

Change the process to a more rational and common sense process.

Anonymous

2/16/2023 12:54 PM

Mandatory response times from planning staff and additional presentation time for applicant teams to respond to public comment

Anonymous

2/16/2023 03:19 PM

There cannot be subjective opinions based on "preference" from the board. Their single task should be to qualify whether a project complies with the desing regulations of the City of SB. Anything else conflicts with personal right and is an over reach. .

Anonymous

2/16/2023 07:27 PM

The board can't distinguish between objective and subjective comments. You can dislike a project that doesn't meet your style preferences but still deem it appropriate. Too much weight on compatibility of style. Most neighborhoods have an eclectic mix

Anonymous

2/17/2023 03:23 PM

Have simple criteria. Meet it and move on. The subjective bs is ridiculous

Anonymous

2/18/2023 05:41 PM

Clear guidelines that the board adheres to. Rulings based on meeting guidelines, not board arbitrary opinions. Quicker turnaround of minor issues like ours.

Anonymous

2/19/2023 08:48 AM

Experienced members with training of what their role is.

Anonymous

2/19/2023 10:10 AM

Consider updating planning documents with more decision trees (flow charts) to help user to navigate the plan submittal requirements based on the scope of the project

Anonymous

2/19/2023 09:54 AM

more professionals on Board

Anonymous

2/19/2023 10:29 AM

Feedback/reviews process for the "experts" required to be involved on projects so the SFDB is aware of those experts actual capability, not just their license.

Anonymous

2/19/2023 12:55 PM

Board members that understand how to make motions, minutes that reflect specific issues discussed by board members. Board members and staff who actually go out and visit projects sites. Explanation to public the boards purview.

Anonymous

2/19/2023 04:02 PM

less personal design opinions from individual board members

Anonymous

2/19/2023 04:27 PM

provide clear guidelines to SFDB board members, minimize their power by having planning staff be the only ones to determine which additional materials are required at the hearings, have 30-day review only at the beginning of the project, not ongoing

Anonymous

2/20/2023 10:35 AM

Create clear guidelines of what the board is reviewing and create accountability from the board to adhere to this. The atmosphere should be encouraging and supportive of homeowners and designers and find ways to work to support them.

Anonymous

2/20/2023 09:36 AM

See Above

Anonymous

2/20/2023 10:35 AM

sensitive to the need of property owner interms of cost and questionable requirements

Anonymous

2/20/2023 11:27 AM

I'd appreciate board members who understand good design. Who realize that forcing 8-foot plate heights across the board is poor design. They have to understand the cost implications of comments and recognize unique solutions.

Anonymous

2/20/2023 12:42 PM

abolish all design review altogether, or comment only on a project's conformance with zoning.

Anonymous

2/20/2023 12:38 PM

Board members should all be professionals. The citizen neighbor members always come with a political agenda and do not impartially consider the project. There should be encouragement from elected officials to appoint leaders in the field that have a pro

Anonymous

2/20/2023 02:07 PM

Wait times to get in front of the board - more hearings and faster processing

Anonymous

2/20/2023 02:31 PM

Objectively apply design standards

Anonymous

2/20/2023 04:03 PM

Not have personal opinions on architecture or usefulness or "what a homeowner should be ok with"

Anonymous

2/20/2023 05:22 PM

Look for ways to have things approved administratively, look to speed up completeness review process, many resubmittals shouldn't need the full 30 days. The time and delays are the biggest issue we're having. Provide more objective standards.

Anonymous

2/20/2023 10:58 PM

The process is inequitable and exacerbating the housing crisis in Santa Barbara. As a result, people either go around the system or make no improvements which does not benefit our neighborhoods. I would do away with the board entirely.

Anonymous

2/20/2023 05:51 PM

More professional board members

Anonymous

2/20/2023 08:35 PM

Eliminate hearings for any project that meets building codes and zoning regulations. If hearings are required, public speakers should be limited to neighbors on lots directly adjacent. Speakers should be required to provide evidence of proximity

Anonymous

2/20/2023 09:02 PM

This process should take no more than 1-2 hours working with professionals. Stop with the theatrics and be professional.

Anonymous

2/20/2023 10:46 PM

When staff makes a mistake, the homeowner should not be the one to suffer the consequences.

Anonymous

2/21/2023 08:16 AM

add more projects to the consent agenda and look at what projects could be removed from the full board and/or what could be a staff level administrative design review approval

Anonymous

I would change that the SFDB cannot comment on architectural style.

2/21/2023 09:08 AM

Anonymous

2/21/2023 01:04 PM

The process of SFDB is draining to the creativity of the designer and architects. It limits the creativity and also reducing the chances of people completing project that would benefit the community.

Anonymous

2/21/2023 12:13 PM

The SFDB should focus on neighborhood/community compatibility, encourage good design, and be objectively open-minded to its many architectural styles and forms, whether or not a particular style is their personal preference.

Anonymous

2/21/2023 12:00 PM

Board's strict adherence to their purview (design guidelines), and staff correcting the board as required to help guide them back to their purview (not personal tangents straying from the guidelines).

Anonymous

2/21/2023 11:46 AM

Length of time

Anonymous

2/21/2023 12:28 PM

Faster processing

Anonymous

2/21/2023 01:39 PM

I'd eliminate it completely or make sure there is someone on there from SCiARC. And a lawyer.

Anonymous

2/21/2023 01:20 PM

Do not let opinions of others (neighbors) alter the requirements by the board. Hold everyone to the same standard no matter what a neighbor(s) think(s). Do not give power to the NIMBY's.

Anonymous

2/21/2023 02:22 PM

I would go directly to city council and not waist my time. I

Anonymous

2/21/2023 02:04 PM

create a streamlined priority service for applicants who rank high in making complete quality applications to the City.

Anonymous

2/21/2023 02:29 PM

Pre-meetings with staff or members before project design completion, meeting prep.

Anonymous

2/21/2023 04:54 PM

Require staff planner to attend the hearing and do a staff report setting out the purview of the board and and encourage the board to

stick to objective comments based on regulations rather than personal preference. Maintain decorum.

Anonymous

2/21/2023 05:27 PM

Require professional architects to be on the board who understand good design for all types of architecture that is appropriate for the site.

Anonymous

2/21/2023 07:10 PM

Clarity and specificity

Anonymous

2/21/2023 10:39 PM

The length of time and nitpicky comments associated with the process

Anonymous

2/22/2023 05:42 AM

Tell me the parameters on what will be an acceptable type of material to be used on roofs in Santa Barbara and we will attempt to adhere to this, but metal roofs are a viable eco friendly product that should not be outlawed.

Anonymous

2/22/2023 09:45 AM

SFDB should not hold the opinion that it is their job to make all projects better. The board should approve well designed projects without feeling that it is their obligation to suggest changes.

Anonymous

2/22/2023 11:19 AM

Fewer triggers to require SFDB

Anonymous

2/22/2023 10:57 AM

not have it

Anonymous

2/22/2023 12:36 PM

Reduce the submittal requirements, shorten & simplify the staff review process. The City has made this WAY too hard.

Anonymous

2/23/2023 12:30 PM

Number of meetings - limit to 2 or 3.

Optional question (189 response(s), 248 skipped)

Question type: Single Line Question

Q23 | This survey is confidential. However, if you wish to be involved in future focus groups about SFDB process improvements, please provide your email address below.

Anonymous
2/08/2023 05:38 PM

[REDACTED]

Anonymous
2/09/2023 11:26 AM

[REDACTED]

Anonymous
2/09/2023 02:21 PM

[REDACTED]

Anonymous
2/09/2023 02:22 PM

[REDACTED]

Anonymous
2/09/2023 03:23 PM

[REDACTED]

Anonymous
2/09/2023 03:33 PM

[REDACTED]

Anonymous
2/09/2023 03:32 PM

[REDACTED]

Anonymous
2/09/2023 03:38 PM

[REDACTED]

Anonymous
2/09/2023 03:40 PM

[REDACTED]

Anonymous
2/09/2023 06:00 PM

[REDACTED]

Anonymous
2/09/2023 07:14 PM

[REDACTED]

Anonymous
2/09/2023 08:46 PM

[REDACTED]

Anonymous
2/09/2023 10:15 PM

[REDACTED]

Anonymous

[REDACTED]

2/10/2023 07:45 AM

Anonymous

[REDACTED]

2/10/2023 08:18 AM

Anonymous

[REDACTED]

2/10/2023 09:23 AM

Anonymous

[REDACTED]

2/10/2023 09:51 AM

Anonymous

[REDACTED]

2/10/2023 12:50 PM

Anonymous

[REDACTED]

2/10/2023 01:16 PM

Anonymous

[REDACTED]

2/10/2023 03:06 PM

Anonymous

[REDACTED]

2/10/2023 03:09 PM

Anonymous

[REDACTED]

2/10/2023 03:38 PM

Anonymous

[REDACTED]

2/10/2023 08:13 PM

Anonymous

[REDACTED]

2/12/2023 09:21 AM

Anonymous

[REDACTED]

2/12/2023 10:54 PM

Anonymous

[REDACTED]

2/13/2023 10:46 AM

Anonymous

[REDACTED]

2/13/2023 11:45 AM

Anonymous

2/13/2023 11:52 AM

[REDACTED]

Anonymous

2/13/2023 12:39 PM

[REDACTED]

Anonymous

2/13/2023 01:19 PM

[REDACTED]

Anonymous

2/13/2023 02:56 PM

[REDACTED]

Anonymous

2/13/2023 06:16 PM

[REDACTED]

Anonymous

2/15/2023 06:39 AM

[REDACTED]

Anonymous

2/15/2023 02:02 PM

[REDACTED]

Anonymous

2/15/2023 04:52 PM

[REDACTED]

Anonymous

2/15/2023 03:05 PM

[REDACTED]

Anonymous

2/15/2023 06:22 PM

[REDACTED]

Anonymous

2/16/2023 03:19 PM

[REDACTED]

Anonymous

2/16/2023 07:27 PM

[REDACTED]

Anonymous

2/19/2023 10:10 AM

[REDACTED]

Anonymous

2/19/2023 04:02 PM

[REDACTED]

Anonymous
2/19/2023 04:27 PM

[REDACTED]

Anonymous
2/20/2023 09:36 AM

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Anonymous
2/20/2023 11:27 AM

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Anonymous
2/20/2023 05:22 PM

[REDACTED]

Anonymous
2/21/2023 08:16 AM

[REDACTED]

Anonymous
2/21/2023 11:05 AM

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Anonymous
2/21/2023 12:28 PM

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Anonymous
2/21/2023 01:39 PM

[REDACTED]

Anonymous
2/21/2023 02:22 PM

[REDACTED]

Anonymous
2/21/2023 02:04 PM

[REDACTED]

Anonymous
2/21/2023 02:26 PM

[REDACTED]

Anonymous
2/21/2023 02:29 PM

[REDACTED]

Anonymous
2/21/2023 04:54 PM

[REDACTED]

Anonymous
2/21/2023 07:10 PM

[REDACTED]

Anonymous

2/22/2023 05:42 AM



Anonymous

2/22/2023 11:19 AM



Anonymous

2/22/2023 12:36 PM



Optional question (58 response(s), 379 skipped)

Question type: Email Question