CITY OF ORANGE
DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE
MINUTES – FINAL

July 7, 2010

Committee Members Present:	Bill Cathcart Adrienne Gladson Tim McCormack Craig Wheeler Joe Woollett
Committee Members Absent:	None
Staff in Attendance:	Ed Knight, Assistant Community Development Director Dan Ryan, Historic Preservation Planner Doris Nguyen, Associate Planner Sonal Thakur, Assistant Planner Sandi Dimick, Recording Secretary

Administrative Session – 5:00 P.M.

Chair Cathcart opened the Administrative Session and asked if there was any information from Staff?

Assistant Community Development Director, Ed Knight, stated it was one of those rare occurrences when there was a Design Review Committee and Planning Commission Meeting on the same evening. He asked if the last two items could be moved up on the Agenda to be heard first; as Historic Preservation Planner, Dan Ryan, had an item that would be presented at the Planning Commission Meeting that began at 7:00 p.m. Chair Cathcart stated the Agenda would be heard in the following order, Item No. 4, 5, 2 and 3. Mr. Knight stated that Assistant Planner, Sonal Thakur, also had an item at both meetings.

The Committee Members reviewed the minutes from the regular Design Review Committee Meeting of June 16, 2010. Changes and corrections were noted.

Committee Member McCormack made a motion to adjourn the Administrative Session.

SECOND:	Joe Woollett
AYES:	Bill Cathcart, Adrienne Gladson, Tim McCormack, Craig Wheeler, Joe Woollett
NOES:	None
ABSTAIN:	None
ABSENT:	None

MOTION CARRIED.

Administrative Session adjourned at 5:22 p.m.

Regular Session - 5:30 P.M.

<u>ROLL CALL:</u>

All members of the Design Review Committee were present.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

Opportunity for members of the public to address the Design Review Committee on matters not listed on the Agenda.

There was none.

CONSENT ITEMS:

All matters that are announced as Consent Items are considered to be routine by the Design Review Committee and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of said items unless members of the Design Review Committee, staff or the public request specific items to be removed from the Consent Items for separate action

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(1) APPROVAL OF MINUTES: June 16, 2010

Committee Member McCormack made a motion to approve the minutes from the regular Design Review Committee Meeting on June 16, 2010, with changes and corrections noted during the Administrative Session.

SECOND: Joe Woollett
AYES: Tim McCormack, Craig Wheeler, Joe Woollett
NOES: None
ABSTAIN: Bill Cathcart, Adrienne Gladson
ABSENT: None

MOTION CARRIED.

Chair Cathcart stated the Agenda would be heard in the following order: Item No. 4, 5, 2, and 3, due to the commencement of the Planning Commission Meeting at 7:00 p.m.

AGENDA ITEMS:

Continued Items:

(2) DRC No. 4486-10 – CASA DE LAGO (24 CARROTS)

- A proposal to legalize a 2,018 square foot enclosed patio expansion, to be used in association with a 5,697 square foot existing building for catered banquet events.
- 1615 E. Lincoln Avenue
- Staff Contact: Sonal Thakur, 714-744-7239, sthakur@cityoforange.org
- Preliminary Review from DRC meeting of June 2, 2010
- DRC Action: Recommendation to the Planning Commission

Assistant Planner, Sonal Thakur, presented a project overview consistent with the Staff Report.

Applicant, Russell Khouri, address on file, stated they had diligently attempted to come up with a compromise that would satisfy both the DRC and the use of the building and also to retain their tenant 24 Carrots along the way. Unfortunately they had been left with an un-permitted structure from a previous tenant back in 1980 or somewhere in that time frame. He was perplexed as to how such involved work could have been performed without being permitted or even being caught during the process of improvements. They had gone back in the records to understand what had occurred; unfortunately they had not come up with anything.

Committee Member Gladson asked if the property had been purchased in an "as is" condition?

Mr. Khouri stated they had actually constructed the shopping center.

Committee Member Gladson asked if he was the restaurant owner that bought it, and had he not known who had done the work?

Mr. Khouri stated he was actually the landlord and he believed the Brickyard Restaurant had done the work. There was some documentation that the landlord had approved the plans prior to the tenant obtaining permits. That was what the documentation had shown. They were hoping for some consideration in the matter as they had not wanted to loose their tenant. They needed the income and the City could also use the revenue.

Public Comment

None.

Chair Cathcart opened the item to the Committee for discussion.

Committee Member Wheeler stated he had not noticed on the drawings how far the new window wall would be from the existing retaining wall.

Architect, Dan Beauchamp, address on file, stated he was not certain there were actual dimensions, some of the areas were new, but existing. He referred to the plans and stated the area was back from the retaining wall and it was the end of the existing roof joist and he pointed out where the roof arched structure appeared. The reality was that the dimension was on a ¼" scale and he guessed it was around 3'.

Committee Member Wheeler stated they could add a condition that it should be no less than some number, just to clarify it.

Applicant, George Mabayed, address on file, stated it went back to the existing columns that were there. It was a good starting point.

Committee Member Wheeler stated that he had mentioned at the previous meeting that there were problems with the roof plan. He felt that it had not been resolved as there was a hip that should be shown and the configuration of the mechanical area was different than what had been shown. It was not a terribly important issue, however, he found that being on the Design Review Committee over the years if the drawings were sloppy the work was often sloppy.

Mr. Beauchamp stated in defense of himself if there was a missing hip, he frankly just missed it. Given what he had from the original drawings on the project he was surprised that they were able to build the project from the drawings he had. He understood that originally the project had not been built to be a restaurant; it was built as four retail suites. According to Mr. Mabayed, on the original drawings from 1977 the site was to be built as four in line suites with the area in the back as an open concrete area to have rear access. Apparently from the time the drawings had been permitted to construction something had changed and that was the dilemma they faced now as it appeared there had been a remodel during construction. It was close in square footage to what the drawings had shown, however, for a use they had not done that and possibly half way through construction they changed it to a restaurant use. It had to have been built between 1978 and 1981 because he turned 21 in 1977 and remembered going to the site as a dance club prior to the early 1980's and somewhere in there it was a dance-restaurant.

Committee Member Wheeler stated it was a very nice restaurant as he had gone there in the late 1970's and he had eaten a very nice meal there.

Committee Member Gladson stated she was sure there had been many a prom held there.

Mr. Mobayed stated "and weddings."

Committee Member McCormack commented that the plans were being worked on between 1977 and 1978, as he had worked on the plans for The Brickyard prior to going to Cal Poly. It became The Brickyard in 1978.

Mr. Beauchamp stated they could have built the other buildings and the other site had remained as a pad building.

Committee Member McCormack stated it was always a Restaurant, it was the Brickyard Restaurant.

Mr. Beauchamp stated the original plans had shown it as four retail suites.

Committee Member Woollett stated the west side wall would be pulled back, the windows would be pulled back and it was about 3'. He asked if the windows would go all the way down to the slab?

Mr. Beauchamp stated yes. There was a post and beam column line on the floor plan and where the post and beam existed on the un-permitted overhang, they would go back to the standard store front pattern and match the other store fronts in the center.

Committee Member Woollett asked if they would use aluminum?

Mr. Beauchamp stated it would be a bronze glazed aluminum store front system. Similar to what existed on the other businesses.

Committee Member Woollett asked what they would do at the base where there was concrete, and he asked if water might get in there?

Mr. Beauchamp stated they would put in a curb to raise it up or cut the concrete.

Mr. Khouri stated they were worried about interfering with the integrity of the retaining wall.

Mr. Mobayed stated they had considered the possibility of planter boxes.

Committee Member Wheeler stated it would be a shame as that area would become wasted space. In the last meeting one of the suggestions he had made was if the windows were pulled back far enough they could leave a row of tables outside and 100% of the area could be used.

Mr. Beauchamp stated as much as it was a design issue it was also a use issue. The reality was that the particular building on that particular site ran 180 degrees opposite of any other retail concept or restaurant concept in terms of visualization, of being able to see what was there, of drawing patrons in, and even for the patio area based on where it was located, although it had a beautiful view of the park it was also on the north and west sides and in the summer it would have sun and in the winter it would be shaded most of the days and it would be unrelenting. The basic economics of what was going on made it difficult for someone to move in such as a Quizno's and to have something such as a small sandwich shop be successful. That type of business had been unsuccessful at that location. It was a bad deal and it was diametrically opposed to another restaurant that was on the site and he was not certain if the landlord had an agreement with Denny's regarding competition.

Mr. Mobayed stated the center had changed into more of a professional center over the years.

Mr. Beauchamp stated the unique use of a banquet center worked. It worked due to the time it was used, nights and weekends when the center was basically vacant. He and Ms. Thakur had determined that parking was not an issue. On a weekend when there might be a wedding reception 80% of the businesses would be empty. The other concern was that the back dining patio or having an open patio became a security problem. There were security issues in the

center. They had found a bed on top of a patio cover that the homeless or someone was using. There was no way to see that from a typical sight pattern, even when security was patrolling.

Committee Member Gladson stated she understood all of that, but what she was struggling with was just the aesthetics of it. She respected the economics and the use part of it; but she needed to separate all of that from the internal consistency and design and that was what she was focused on. She wanted to arrive at the best option to have the project more architecturally compatible with the old Brickyard center. If she could understand the design strategy she could be in favor of the project as she wanted the business to succeed.

Mr. Beauchamp stated he understood her concern and that was where he would argue that they could go back and tear it out and get it back there, but what they would have was a building that was designed to match the center and it would remain empty.

Committee Member Gladson stated she understood that was what he thought, but she felt there were ways to get the building to look compatible. She thought the applicant's were going in the right direction with pulling it back in and getting the rafters exposed and adding more of the original materials.

Committee Member Wheeler stated the drawings had not shown any exposed beams.

Mr. Beauchamp stated he had just received the letter that indicated that they were going to do that and he would have shown that on the plans as there was 4" x 6" framing.

Committee Member Wheeler stated there were some irregular ones and they might need to add some dummy beam out lookers to carry the rhythm. Another issue he had was that a new form was being introduced to the mechanical screen. There was a new material that had no sense of relationship to the building. One possibility was to do away with the battered edges and have a simple rectangular form or to stucco it to match the building stucco. The plans needed to show the drainage from the area. It could be a floating screen and they had a very small palette of materials to use; there was stucco, tile, glass, and wood.

Mr. Beauchamp stated they could work on that.

Committee Member Gladson stated she agreed that the mechanical screen needed to be more compatible and she felt the applicant's were going in the right direction. She wished an outdoor space could be added to be used by the banquet facility, but she was willing to compromise on that element if they could get the building back to what it originally looked like. She understood that the business needed the indoor space and she needed to see a rhythm and style that fit.

Mr. Mobayed stated the other problem was that it was a four sided building and they had captured 3 sides.

Committee Member Gladson stated it was something that should never have happened, but it had and it was water under the bridge and it was unpermitted; now they were stuck with trying to find the best possible solution.

Committee Member Woollett stated he felt they had a solution. Committee Member Wheeler had stated to pull the fascia off so the rafters were visible and add new out lookers if necessary and change the equipment screen to more compatible materials and he agreed with those suggestions.

Committee Member Wheeler stated the applicants had come a long way with the project and he was rather content with the way it was with the suggestions they had made. To remove the curved elements and the portions where a flashing roof was sticking out beyond the overhang, those were the elements that had really appalled him. It would not certainly be returning it to its original form, but if they picked up the theme, the rhythm of the rafter tails and the mechanical screen was cleaned up he could support the project. He felt it was a good compromise. As far as the north area he understood that it had been built un-permitted and on the east side there was a similar addition that had been made that was permitted. Both were very similar. If the addition had been approved by a Committee at the time that it was done; it would be matched and he was not terribly upset about the north section. It was not wonderful, it was there and the applicant's should not be penalized. The stucco finish had not matched, they were similar and he was not certain if there was anything that could be done about it. With the items they spoke of he would support the project.

Committee Member McCormack stated he agreed with Committee Member Wheeler and the use of the rafter tails would go a long way. He wondered why the wall could not be lowered more.

Committee Member Wheeler stated instead of having the glass go all the way to the slab it might be wiser to have a two foot tall wall there, as it would not obscure any thing visually. The water proofing issue could be dealt with in a better manner too.

Committee Member Woollett suggested to add potted plants on the concrete area if they left the concrete there.

Committee Member McCormack suggested adding a vine, such as Boston ivy to have the wall appear as a hedge and add gravel mulch along the bottom with a French drain to take care of the drainage and call it a day.

Chair Cathcart asked if he was suggesting a deciduous vine?

Committee Member McCormack stated the plant type would be the applicant's choice. It was nice to see the seasonal change and if they used the creeping fig on it there would be green all year round and it would appear as a hedge.

Committee Member Wheeler stated he would suggest a curb rather than a low wall to match the windows that existed. The vines would be a nice transition.

Chair Cathcart stated there were many things they could do with the different types of vines, they could use an evergreen to hang on the deciduous vines with a different fragrance, a different flower.

Committee Member Gladson stated she was reviewing the list of conditions and she had not seen it, but there could be some things that might be of assistance to the applicant for vagrant problem.

Committee Member McCormack stated they could add a valve that was motion sensitive and once the motion sensor was activated it would spray water. It could be rigged to work that way.

Committee Member Wheeler made a motion to recommend approval to the Planning Commission, DRC No. 4486-10, Casa De Lago (24 Carrots), subject to the conditions contained in the Staff Report and with the following additional conditions:

1. The mechanical roof screen shall be redesigned to incorporate materials and forms that existed on the building, such as stucco and to use a straight and rectangular form, as opposed to a battered edge.
2. The exposed rafter tails be maintained or added as necessary to maintain the rhythm.
3. The area between the existing retaining wall and the new glass be a minimum of a 24" distance.
4. The area between the existing retaining wall and new glass wall be soil for planting vines, including gravel mulch to act as drainage as well.
5. That the new glass wall be mounted on a 6" to 8" high curb to prevent water intrusion.
6. The new planter area shall be furnished with a drip irrigation system.

And with the suggestion that a mix of deciduous vines to be planted in the area outside the glass window.

SECOND: Joe Woollett
AYES: Bill Cathcart, Adrienne Gladson, Tim McCormack, Craig Wheeler, Joe Woollett
NOES: None
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: None

MOTION CARRIED.

New Agenda Items:

(3) DRC No. 4489-10 - KATELLA COMMERCE CENTER

- A proposal to apply stucco to the portions of the building where the wood siding was removed.
- 1740 W. Katella Avenue
- Staff Contact: Doris Nguyen, 714-744-7223, dnguyen@cityoforange.org
- DRC Action: Final Determination

Committee Member Wheeler suggested that the proposed project be approved without discussion.

The applicant agreed and there was no public comment.

Committee Member Woollett made a motion to approve, DRC No. 4489-41, Katella Commerce Center, subject to the conditions contained in the Staff Report.

SECOND: Adrienne Gladson
AYES: Bill Cathcart, Adrienne Gladson, Tim McCormack, Craig Wheeler, Joe Woollett
NOES: None
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: None

MOTION CARRIED.

(4) DRC No. 4492-10 - THE BITE MARKET – SIGN PROGRAM

- A proposal for new signage for a specialty grocery store in the Plaza.
- 162 N. Glassell Street, Unit B , Plaza Historic District
- Staff Contact: Daniel Ryan, 714-744-7224, dryan@cityoforange.org
- DRC Action: Final Determination

Committee Member Wheeler stated he would be recused from the item's presentation as his place of business was within 500' of the proposed project.

Historic Preservation Planner, Dan Ryan, presented a project overview consistent with the Staff Report.

Applicants Bridget Reilly and Patrick Smith, addresses on file, stated they were available for questions and had nothing additional to add.

Public Comment

None.

Chair Cathcart opened the item to the Committee for discussion.

Committee Member Woollett stated he had reviewed the proposed signs and found they were acceptable as presented.

Chair Cathcart stated he agreed.

Committee Member Gladson stated she wanted to ask about the shiny surfaces and if Staff was comfortable with the samples provided? She found the proposed signs to be appropriate.

Mr. Ryan stated he was comfortable with the samples and materials provided. There was a concern with one of the signs materials. Typically they had gone with a matt finish.

Mr. Smith stated most of the sign was done with a one shot enamel finish, it was all hand lettered and it would have a semi-gloss finish; which would be conducive to the old days of lettering.

Committee Member McCormack pointed to an area on a photo and asked if it was a down light?

Ms. Reilly stated she thought it had once been a light but that it had been covered over.

Mr. Smith stated it might be a drain for the canopy.

Mr. Ryan stated typically there would not be an exposed down spout.

Committee Member McCormack stated there were a few typos, losing the "r" in friendly, it became "fiendly".

Chair Cathcart stated in the Staff Report it read "ego-friendly products" and in reviewing the sign it was "eco" and that was okay.

Committee Member McCormack made a motion to approve, DRC No. 4492-10, The Bite Market-Sign Program, subject to the conditions contained in the Staff Report.

SECOND: Adrienne Gladson
AYES: Bill Cathcart, Adrienne Gladson, Tim McCormack, Joe Woollett
NOES: None
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: None
RECUSED: Craig Wheeler

MOTION CARRIED.

(5) DRC No. 4493-10 – THOMSON RESIDENCE

- A proposal to remove existing lawn and install hardscape on a residential property.
- 158 S. Harwood Street, Old Towne Historic District
- Staff Contact: Daniel Ryan, 714-744-7224, dryan@cityoforange.org
- DRC Action: Final Determination

Historic Preservation Planner, Dan Ryan, presented a project overview consistent with the Staff Report.

Applicant, Janice Thomson, address on file, stated she and her husband purchased the property out of a foreclosure in June of 2009. The home had been in a state of severe neglect over the last few years and they had made improvements, painted it and they had received a lot of compliments from neighbors up and down the street. The predominant feature of the home was a very large Mulberry tree, which the previous owner had encircled with a small brick planter. The tree was frequented by all the local parrots which seemed to love the Mulberry fruit. The tree provided significant shading to the home and yard and it resulted in very little air conditioning use by the tenants. The tree produced a tremendous amount of leaves. The front yard had a square footage of 2,194, in which 986 square feet was existing hardscape with the driveway that was fairly wide, with additional walkways in the front. The total planted area was 1,226 square feet, some of which was grass. The front yard sprinkler system had not worked and the front lawn was not viable. Ms. Thomson stated to address the leaf litter issue of the tree they had come up with a plan of 40% living greenery through the use of 3 different planter areas with low water use plants, such as Bird of Paradise, Flax, Little Pinky and Agapanthus and they proposed to surround the planter areas with decomposed granite, which would allow rain water and run off to percolate to the ground water basin. The planter areas would reduce the total planted area to 892 square feet, which still fell within the 40% living greenery requirement. They proposed the landscape, understanding it was a component of the historic district, and they were part of the Mills Act and they had not proposed any modifications to the house, and they were not attempting to operate outside of the historic guidelines. They were attempting to produce a compatible landscape plan in light of the property conditions and the surrounding neighborhood. They were next door to a completely unhistoric building that had not even a weed of landscaping and behind them was the school that had the synthetic turf field. They were attempting to work within the shading on the property and produce an efficient landscape that required little or no water or maintenance. She was open to any suggestions or directions if the DRC had not agreed with their plant selection. She felt that possibly the historic guidelines could be amended at some point in the future in the manner they were amended to address energy conservation issues in the mid 1990's. They had provided a landscape plan that met the intent of the zoning ordinance and they were not interested in installing a lawn in view of the water realities of Southern California and in light of the shading of the tree.

Chair Cathcart stated on the area around the tree and what used to be the lawn was there an existing irrigation system in place?

Ms. Thomson stated to her knowledge there was not an irrigation system around the tree, the tree seemed to work off rain water.

Chair Cathcart asked if anything had been planted in the foundation areas?

Ms. Thomson stated when the property was purchased it was just bare ground, they had placed some plants in the front of the house and there was not an irrigation system there.

The Committee Members reviewed the photos with the applicant.

Chair Cathcart stated he understood the backyard irrigation system was in disrepair.

Ms. Thomson stated the front yard was also in the same state.

Chair Cathcart stated the planters with the exception of the lawn had not been planted.

Ms. Thomson stated they had put plants in the planters since they had purchased the property.

Chair Cathcart stated the applicant was pointing to a different area.

Committee Member McCormack stated there was a before and after photo.

Mr. Ryan stated the other photo Chair Cathcart was referring to was when the Mills contract was in place and there was a photo of the existing condition.

Chair Cathcart asked how the plants in the planter areas were watered?

Ms. Thomson stated with a hose.

Chair Cathcart stated that was historic. He asked if there were any further questions for the applicant? There were none.

Public Comment

Jeff Frankel, address on file, representing the OTPA, stated the DRC had discussed appropriate and inappropriate landscape many times and he had been present for many of the discussions. It appeared that the proposed project was utilizing inappropriate materials that would not comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards or the Old Towne Design Standards. The site was also a Mills Act property; the Mills Act was a preservation tool that was developed to insure that participants complied with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and the proposed project had not complied with those standards or the Old Towne Design Standards. In essence participants were compensated for complying with the standards and it would be difficult to amend any standards; and he doubted that would happen in the near future or in the future at all. He thought that it would probably be a good idea to come up with a landscape plan that utilized limited grass areas with native plantings; traditionally many of the homes had very small lawns in front with plantings and vegetable gardens in the rear. The OTPA felt the proposed plan was inappropriate and needed to comply with the standards.

Chair Cathcart opened the item for discussion by the Committee.

Committee Member Wheeler stated he would basically remain out of the discussion as he was not a landscape expert. He asked what the white area on the applicant's plan represented?

Ms. Thomson stated it represented soil.

Committee Member Gladson asked if the applicant had looked at alternatives, or had conducted any research of cultural landscapes; of what may have previously existed?

Ms. Thomson stated not she had not. She had not had the means to do that.

Committee Member McCormack stated he grappled with the issues each time they had gone through what was historic, the hose was historic and an irrigation system would be a new thing. When he had reviewed the project and looking at Old Towne and old materials, it was concrete and turf. Typically when the community was developed they were in a Mediterranean climate and they had to import water to water the popular plants of the time. Now that we were going back to nature and not wanting to use the water and he had seen the value in it, although it was not historic. He was always going to state that he would get rid of the front lawn because lawns were bleeding them dry of water and there was the use of fossil fuels to mow it, but the lawn was iconic to the neighborhood and it had value in that regard. He had a large area he had to maintain turf in on his own property to be compatible with his neighborhood, and as much as he would want to plant a meadow it would not be compatible with the neighborhood fabric. He was not living in Old Towne. He grappled with the decomposed granite, although it could be considered historical if it was used as a path, but not in an open area. He felt the decomposed granite would not be compatible for that reason, but he thought it was appropriate as a use as upgrade for dirt as a path. He would suggest using decomposed granite only for a path. As for appropriate plant materials and they grappled with what time period was historic, should they go back to the use of native grasses that needed little water, or a Mediterranean type garden which the applicant could create and not need turf, or to go back to the 1940's with the iconic front lawn. He was not certain what was the correct way to go. Committee Member McCormack stated the applicant could pull off the Mediterranean approach without turf if they treated it in a formal way. The applicant's design could be considered formal; the design put aside he felt there were conflicting approaches as the proposed plant materials were thirsty plants; although the Bird of Paradise could handle that. His personal approach would be to reduce the turf, although his historical nature told him to use limited turf as an appropriate approach.

Chair Cathcart stated he wrestled with it also and he felt the lawn was such an icon to the era and there was an advantage that the people before them had not had; lawns looked alike but there were types that required less water. He would be inclined to suggest planting more lawn with something like Buffalo grass or some of the grasses that required less water and above all the proposal needed an irrigation system. There were "smart" controllers that regulated water through a satellite system and it could be regulated for soil types. The applicant had mentioned that the white areas on the plan represented dirt and he had not felt that exposed dirt was appropriate. He suggested mulching it. His grandmother had a compost system that she used for mulch and sometimes they carried the historic relevance too far; and if they wanted that the applicant should install an incinerator and get rid of their dryer and replace it with a clothesline. There were things that needed to come up to speed. He had concurred with Committee Member McCormack that the plant materials chosen were moderate to heavy water usage. He suggested putting a bit more thought into the drought tolerant aspect of the project and the iconic element

of the grass. He and Committee Member McCormack disagreed; as he thought a formal approach was not necessary. His grandmother would come out and randomly plant. It could be organized, but not formal. He felt that the most important part was in driving around Old Towne there were lawns.

Committee Member Woollett asked if there was a problem growing anything under the Mulberry tree and if there was, what could they suggest to the applicant?

Chair Cathcart stated it wasn't that plants would not grow; it would be difficult to get anything to grow there.

Committee Member McCormack stated the issue was root competition and choosing a sod type front lawn would be very difficult to get even because grass would not grow on roots. The solution he suggested, and Chair Cathcart had suggested Buffalo grass; to use grasses that were a bit taller and he had a short list of five that could be used on the proposed project. They needed very little water and a front lawn feel could be developed, but not necessarily a lawn that needed mowing. There were many different grasses on the market that could work. The one thing that the applicant could not get away from was that they would not be able to get an "even iconic" lawn due to the roots of the tree. It would need to be determined if they wanted something that grew over and covered the roots and could compete with the roots it was a taller grass and looked a bit shabby, but looked greener and more even. It could be formal, it was not necessary, however there was the English Cottage garden which was the romantic form of nature and there was the French more formal garden, and either landscape could work. He felt the applicant needed to choose one and then pick the plants and what needed to go around the tree. He would choose a product that would provide a small grass that would not get mowed and create it in the form of a front lawn; it could be a panel or a sweeping area. He suggested going back to the drawing board and applying one of the principals to the new front lawn with the tree situation and creatively choose plants that would work. He felt Buffalo grass would not work as well in the shade and they would need to pick one that worked well with shade and he suggested the use of Carexpansa; it was the best grass for root competition and shade. It was a grass that he used on his own property and it worked as advertised.

Mr. Ryan stated that product used less water and required little mowing.

Committee Member McCormack stated mowing was not needed or it would go away; it was mowed every year or second or third year.

Committee Member Gladson stated they had wrestled with the use of artificial lawns and would there be an instance where it would be appropriate in Old Towne, particularly in Old Towne where the front yard was a significant cultural element. She agreed that historically the home at one time had a lawn.

Chair Cathcart stated not to have Mr. Frankel jump out of his seat.

Mr. Frankel stated there was an ordinance that had not allowed artificial turf in Old Towne.

Chair Cathcart stated he understood that in ribbon driveways the turf was difficult to grow in that area.

Committee Member McCormack stated it was difficult; he had it at his home and he moved his cars often and the area received sun.

Committee Member Gladson stated she understood it would not be appropriate for the proposed project; but something to consider for the future with technology enhancements and she was sensitive to the applicant's desire to not consume huge amounts of water and to come up with a low water and low maintenance landscape. She had understood that the property was an income producing property for the applicant, in terms of rents and leases, and she could appreciate that.

Committee Member McCormack stated he was not a fan of artificial turf, with the exception of dog runs and soccer fields that were used 24 hours a day.

Chair McCormack stated an up to date irrigation system was necessary, in order to regulate the water and he felt it was important to do that.

Ms. Thomson stated there was not much sun on the property.

Committee Member McCormack stated he had driven by the property and the tree would survive no matter what. He felt the applicant needed to deal with the root situation and to install a grass that would not need mowing and they could use a smaller area of lawn, and to choose a style as well.

Committee Member Woollett stated they could plant it all in Carex.

Committee Member McCormack stated it would appear as more of a meadow instead of a lawn.

Committee Member Woollett stated there would be plantings around the base of the buildings.

Committee Member McCormack stated they could plant in layers and it was something that was done historically.

Committee Member Wheeler asked if there was any other material that would be appropriate for a Mediterranean garden, something other than grass?

Committee Member Woollett asked if Hydrangea could be planted in lieu of grass or other ground cover?

Committee Member McCormack stated the problem was height, to find something that remained under 12" and remained flat. Everything else expanded.

Ms. Thomson stated they needed to rake the leaves.

Committee Member McCormack stated he had an area with Carexpansa that he had not mowed in three years and the leaves stayed in it and they decomposed to fertilize the area. They could achieve a leafless ground plane if they had a gardener that was out there everyday.

Committee Member Wheeler asked if there was another plant they could suggest, such as an herb?

Committee Member McCormack stated Rosemary would work, however, it tended to spread and then needed edge trimming. It was a tough situation.

Committee Member Gladson stated she was sensing the applicant needed to do some more homework and they had chimed in on some thoughts.

Committee Member McCormack suggested the applicant drive around Orange and see what existed. There were many gardens that had the curvy 1950's English gardens that had the turf in the center; and there were more formal French gardens with turf boardering the walkway and he had seen homes with hedges bordering the walkways.

Chair Cathcart stated they could plant a hedge with roses behind that and mulch the ground under the roses.

Mr. Ryan asked how close to the tree could they plant to?

Chair Cathcart stated out to the drip line was suspect.

Committee Member McCormack stated the big challenges were lack of fertile soil, root competition and shade.

Committee Member Gladson stated in the shade was where they would want to design something different. She suggested planting to the drip line and then bringing in another element.

Committee Member McCormack stated he would want to reduce the lawn and have the edges of the yard be more of a statement. The plants could be layered and to figure out where that balance would be.

Chair Cathcart stated the only formal area he would suggest would be around the tree, to maintain that shape with plants; he was less concerned about the formality.

Ms. Thomson asked if she could place some of the decomposed granite around the tree?

Committee Member McCormack stated the decomposed granite would need to be a path, and suggested having a plant or something there that needed servicing; somewhere that the path would be leading to.

Chair Cathcart stated they could plant something in that area; it was not impossible and he felt gardening was not an exact science and there were areas that some plants would not grow in and the applicant needed to experiment with what would grow in that area and to plant something that might spill over and to have a decomposed granite path. Plantings could be placed around the outside of the walkway and from a distance the path would not be visible.

Committee Member Wheeler suggested placing plants in pots around the tree.

Ms. Thomson asked if brick would have been used?

Mr. Ryan stated if something brick was being built it was possible.

Chair Cathcart stated that what Committee Member McCormack had stated was that concrete was a familiar element to the area, concrete porches, concrete walkways and driveways.

Committee Member McCormack asked if the front entry walk was original?

Ms. Thomson stated she believed it was and that the driveway had been widened.

Committee Member McCormack stated he had made his suggestion of choosing a style, but if the fence was to remain the fence could be bordered with layered shrubs and the turf would not be visible. They could use a low meadow application; it was low water use and low maintenance. He suggested continuing the project.

Committee Member Wheeler suggested having Mr. Ryan approve it and not make it necessary for the applicant to have to come back from Carpenteria.

Mr. Ryan stated his sense was that he would want it to come back to the Design Review Committee and they had given the applicant many good solutions.

Committee Member McCormack stated he felt it was an important project as many of the suggestions and problems they grappled with would set a precedent on the outcome of the project. It was important to have it be right.

Committee Member Gladson stated she would want to review the proposal in order to be able to make a finding and ensure that the final product was compatible with the Old Towne standards.

Committee Member McCormack made a motion to continue, DRC No. 4493-10, Thomson Residence, with the suggestions and recommendations presented.

SECOND: Craig Wheeler
AYES: Bill Cathcart, Adrienne Gladson, Tim McCormack, Craig Wheeler, Joe Woollett
NOES: None
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: None

MOTION CARRIED.

ADJOURNMENT:

Committee Member Gladson made a motion to adjourn to the next regular scheduled Design Review Meeting on Wednesday, July 21, 2010.

SECOND: Tim McCormack
AYES: Bill Cathcart, Adrienne Gladson, Tim McCormack, Craig Wheeler, Joe Woollett
NOES: None
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: None

MOTION CARRIED.

The meeting adjourned at 6:59 p.m.