

Discretionary Review Reform

*Planning Commission Policy for
Two-Year Trial and Public Evaluation*

November 23, 2009

SAN FRANCISCO
PLANNING DEPARTMENT



Goals of Commission's DR Policy

1. Early community engagement and improved communication
 - Improved pre-application (July 09)
 - Better public information through website and access to project specific information (October 09)
2. Strong internal review procedures
 - Quantitative metrics for Planners that trigger Residential Design Team (RDT) review (February 09)
 - RTD review and documented decisions prior to public notification (February 09)

Goals of Commission's DR Policy

3. Review and Resolution of Policy Issues

- Ensure that the Commission identifies DR actions as either one-of-a-kind, or representative of a policy issues (June 09)
- Staff, working with the public, to generate list of policy issues for the Commission to consider and resolve during quarterly reports (ongoing)
- Enable Commission to focus on policy issues instead of DRs that do not fall within the realm of the Commission's definition of exceptional and extraordinary (pending legislation)

Goals of Commission's DR Policy

4. Consistent and predictable permit process

- Exceptional and extraordinary defined and only those projects that meet this definition are given a Commission hearing (pending legislation)

Exceptional and extraordinary circumstances occur when the common-place application of adopted Design Standards to a project does not enhance or conserve neighborhood character, or balance the right to develop the property with impacts on near-by properties or occupants.

These circumstances may arise due to complex topography, irregular lot configuration, unusual context or other conditions not addressed in the Design Standards.

- Adhere to a defined DR timeframe (pending legislation)



What is Discretionary Review?

Discretionary Review (“DR”) is the Planning Commission’s authority to review code-complying projects and take action if the Commission finds the case demonstrates exceptional and extraordinary circumstances.

Notes

