

**ASCC Field Meeting, 5588 Alpine Road, Preliminary Architectural and Site Development Review for a New Residence, Removal of Significant Trees, and Landscaping, and Variance Review for Uncovered Parking**

Chair Sill called the field meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

**ROLL CALL:**

ASCC: Commissioners Breen, Ross, Willson, Vice-Chair Koch and Chair Sill

Town Staff: Interim Planning Director Arly Cassidy

Others present

Brian Ross, property owner

Patrick Finnigan, project architect

Jon Goulden

Interim Planning Director Arly Cassidy presented the report regarding the project which consists of a 3,116 square foot home and detached parking on a 4.55 acre property located at 5588 Alpine Road. The proposed plans include a new single story residence with three bedrooms and two decks. A small 1,120 square foot landscaped area is proposed at the front of the house. The lot is located on Rapley Road, a winding mountainous road off of upper Alpine Road. The property sits on a steeply sloped and forested hillside which faces northeast across Alpine Road. The property is primarily undeveloped and is surrounded by Mid-peninsular Regional Open Space District (MROSD) land to the northwest, north, east, and a small finger to the south.

Interim Director Cassidy explained that the architectural and site development permits were under preliminary review for the development of the house as well as the necessary infrastructure for the house to be off the grid. This includes a well, septic tank and leach field, spring box and pump, propane tank and generator, and water tanks. In addition, the proposal includes a path connecting from the house to the detached parking and a long set of stairs from the house up to the required fire truck pull out and fire hydrant. A variance application was also under preliminary review for the parking, which is proposed as four uncovered spaces, where two covered and two uncovered spaces are required by code.

Following her presentation, commissioners inquired about the covered parking and trees proposed for removal. Property Owner Brian Ross stated that covered parking would be allowed behind the setback, but the geotechnical report makes structures on the unstable soil at that location cost-prohibitive and unsafe, and the cluster of maple trees are proposed for removal due to an overlap with the leach field.

Commissioner Breen asked about the generator, which will be small and only backup for emergencies, as well as walled in. Chair Sill inquired and learned that there will be enough solar energy generation from the roof panels, according to the solar consultant, and that the retaining walls will be small. It was suggested that the hydrant at the top of the stairs could be fed off of the water tanks just below them.

Chair Sill stated that Commissioners would offer further comments on the proposal at the regular evening meeting that evening. Members thanked the applicant and architect for participation in the site meeting. The field meeting adjourned at 5:35 p.m.

**CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

Chair Sill called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Center Historic School House Meeting Room, 765 Portola Road.

Interim Planning Director Arly Cassidy called roll:

Present: ASCC: Commissioners Danna Breen, Dave Ross, and Jane Wilson; Vice Chair Megan Koch; Chair Al Sill  
Absent: None  
Planning Commission Liaison:  
Town Council Liaison:  
Town Staff: Interim Planning Director Arly Cassidy; Planner Cynthia Richardson

**ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

None.

**NEW BUSINESS**

- (1) **Preliminary Review of Proposed Lot Line Adjustment for Parcel A, owned by Ralph & Renee Lewis, identified as APN: 079-074-010 and Parcel B owned by Michael & Susan McLaughlin, identified as APN: 079-074-020. Project located at 88 and 96 Hillbrook Drive, File # LLA 1-2018**

Planner Richardson presented the proposed lot line adjustment for two parcels located at 88 and 96 Hillbrook Drive, as detailed in the staff report. She said the proposal went before the Planning Commission last week for preliminary review. Staff recommended the ASCC offer comments and directions to assist the applicant to make adjustments or clarifications needed before the Planning Commission considers final action on the application.

Chair Sill invited questions from the Commissioners. Hearing none, Chair Sill invited the applicant to comment. Mr. McLaughlin said this proposal is an attempt to fix a lot line that was placed in the wrong location 57 years ago and was discovered four years ago. He said they've figured out how to swap equal square footage to keep everything in compliance.

Chair Sill invited questions for the applicant. Hearing none, he invited comments from the public. Hearing none, Chair Sill brought the item back to the Commission for discussion.

The Commission unanimously recommended that the Planning Commission approve the proposal.

- (2) **Preliminary Architectural and Site Development Review for a New Residence, Removal of Significant Trees, Landscaping, and Variance Review for Uncovered Parking; File # 43-2017, 5588 Alpine Road, Ross Residence**

Interim Planning Director Cassidy described the proposed project for a new 3,116-square-foot home with detached parking on a 4.55-acre property, as detailed in the staff report. A field

meeting was held at the site this afternoon. She said the project was reviewed by the Planning Commission on May 16, and the final map modification was approved at that time. Staff requested that the ASCC offer comments, reactions and direction to assist the applicant and project architect make any plan adjustments or clarifications that members conclude are needed before both Commissions consider final action on the application.

Chair Sill invited questions from the Commissioners.

Vice Chair Koch said it appeared the fire truck turnout will be the actual parking for the house. She said that appears to be the entrance of the house, where the lighting is proposed, where the staircase is located, and is the most direct route to the home. Interim Planning Director Cassidy said she does not believe that is the intent. She said the Town Attorney had advised that the easement is constricted to shared road use and the pullout for the fire truck is an expansion of the road which everyone can use with equal access. A parked car there would be a violation.

Commissioner Breen asked if there was any rain catchment system for the roof. She said it seemed like a good opportunity to catch water, especially with the shed roof forms. The applicant said they have not yet explored that, but will look into it. He said water is an issue on the site so they would be interested in anything they can do to offset the pull from the spring or the use of the well.

With no further questions, Chair Sill invited comment by the applicant. The applicant said Interim Planning Director Cassidy has done a great job of highlighting the various challenges and considerations they've gone through to fit all the puzzle pieces together. He said they have put a lot of thought and effort into making sure the house accommodates the rural nature of the lot and the aesthetic of Portola Valley. He said they would not use the fire truck pullout for parking because it is difficult to drive around the hairpin turn to get up there. He said the primary parking will be down below, and they will walk up. He said in a pinch, they may use that area for quickly unloading something, but it will definitely not be the primary parking for the residence.

Vice Chair Koch said it appeared the applicant based the energy usage off of solar and asked if the solar study was completed. The applicant said he has the solar study, although it was not included in this packet. He said it will be included in the final application. Vice Chair Koch asked if he felt the solar numbers were significant. The applicant said it was one of the major concerns in developing the lot and designing the home. He said a solar consultant conducted a study and developed a report recommending the size and design of the system as well as home design recommendations.

Vice Chair Koch asked if there were any lighting fixtures in the skylights. The applicant said there will be no lights in the skylights.

Commissioner Breen asked if there were covers on the skylights for nighttime. The applicant said the skylights are mostly tucked under the solar panels and are not visible from above.

Commissioner Ross asked the applicant if they had considered solar tubes. The applicant said he did not find them very effective. He said the largest skylight to be installed is 3' x 4' and is screened by the solar panels.

Chair Sill asked if they had considered doing anything with gray water. The applicant said they had not. Chair Sill said he was surprised the applicant was going to irrigate the landscaping and

suggested it would make sense to do it with simple gray water system. Interim Planning Director Cassidy said being gray water-ready is a requirement of the Green Building Ordinance and will be shown on the building plans. With no further questions, Chair Sill invited public comment. Hearing none, Chair Sill brought the item back to the Commission for discussion.

Commissioner Wilson said it is a fascinating site with a lot of challenges. She supported granting the variance. She was appreciative of the reduction in floor area, impervious surface, and water and appreciated exceeding the setbacks. She was supportive of the color board. She suggested removing one of the lights on the doorway as recommended by the Planning Commission. She said the applicant has done a very good job working with a very difficult site.

Commissioner Breen said she completely supported the direction of the project. She was supportive of granting the variance for parking. She said all of the lighting up to the fire truck turnout should be removed. She said she regretted the loss of the really good trees and requested they attempt to save whatever possible. She agreed that irrigation was not necessary. She said the applicants could hand water it for a year and be done with it. She said they need to deal with the broom and thistle now before it starts to scatter. She said many people are allergic to flannel bush, and it should be moved away from pedestrian traffic. She said the applicant's response was creative, and she was supportive of the project.

Commissioner Ross said he was impressed with the applicant's level of commitment to this tricky project. He said the constraints have pushed the applicants in a direction that works for them; however, he thought a lot of people would not be willing to walk with two children and six bags of groceries up the gravel pathway in the rain. He was supportive of the variance for the carport. He was supportive of the color board, the massing of the house, and the siting. He agreed that lighting on the stairs to the fire truck pullout is unnecessary. He said there is so little lighting in the area, the ambient lighting from the windows may be more noticeable; however, he is not concerned about that on this project. He suggested the applicant try to save a couple of the trunks on the maple tree at the pathway, if possible.

Vice Chair Koch was supportive of the color board. She supported the variance for the parking, but wished there was a way to get parking closer to the site. She was supportive of the siting, the architecture, and the style of the house. She asked for more detail on the color of the water tanks. She asked that they limit the removal of significant and unique trees as much as possible. She requested the path lighting from the parking be shown in the landscape plan. She said they will likely need a cart system for getting items to and from the parking area. She agreed the applicants need to revisit the proposed lighting for the stairs to the fire truck pullout. She said only one light is needed at the door at the back of the deck. She said gray water and roof runoff water collection are good ideas. She was supportive of the project.

Chair Sill was supportive of the project. He said the applicant has come up with very creative solutions to a very constrained site. He said lighting did not appear to be necessary on the stairs to the fire truck pullout. He said if there is lighting there, it must be on a separate switch. He was supportive of the landscape plan and said it conformed well to the design guidelines. He was supportive of the variance for the parking. He also suggested they try to save more of the madrones or maples.

Commissioner Breen said when the plans come back, she would like to see more explanation about the path, how it will work, and if there will be lighting. She also wants to see construction staging and invasives management plans.

## **COMMISSION, STAFF, COMMITTEE REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **(3) Request for Ideas on ADU Promotion**

Interim Planning Director Cassidy requested the ASCC members share any ideas they have on removing barriers and encouraging ADU production in Portola Valley, as detailed in the staff report. She said staff will be including all ideas and suggestions from the Planning Commission and the ASCC in its study session with the Town Council on ADU policy, to be held July 11, 2018.

### **(4) News Digest Planning Issues of the Day**

Interim Planning Director Cassidy shared two articles – “What Happens When a City Bans Non-Resident Drivers” and “Affordable Housing Through Philanthropy.”

### **(5) Other Reports**

Chair Sill approved at a modest siding color modification at 185 Meadowood.

Interim Planning Director Cassidy said a well-prepared application has been submitted that is a candidate for the single-review process. The project should come before the Commission in late-July. She said the decision to approve will be available to the Commission but not required. She said that in many municipalities, a lot line adjustment, under the Subdivision law, is handled at staff level. Portola Valley Code requires the Planning Commission review it to assure it meets all of the Code requirements, but it doesn't require three meetings as is the current practice – preliminary Planning Commission, ASCC, final Planning Commission. She said there is no discussion allowed regarding a lot line adjustment, and the Commission's only task is to check to make sure it meets the Zoning Code. She said this is another opportunity where the first two meetings could be eliminated, and it could be taken to only one Planning Commission meeting. She said she will research the Code further to make sure that is all that is required.

In response to Commissioner Breen's question, Interim Planning Director Cassidy said the Town Council has completed the first reading of the Town Budget. Commissioner Breen asked if the ASCC wanted to study anything next year. Interim Planning Director Cassidy said there is \$20,000 in the Budget for a General Plan Consultant for the following year. She said the ASCC will be involved in the upcoming comprehensive update to the General Plan. She said staff has been discussing internally about how to manage workload and also give the Commissions some power over their own agendas. She said they plan to resume meetings where the Chairs will meet and discuss upcoming issues.

Commissioner Breen suggested construction staging and the fence ordinance be examined.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

### **(5) ASCC Meeting of June 11, 2018**

Vice Chair Koch moved to approve the June 11, 2018, minutes as submitted. Seconded by Commissioner Ross, the motion passed 3-0, with Commissioner Breen and Commissioner Wilson abstaining.

**ADJOURNMENT** [8:08 p.m.]