

**ASCC Field Meeting, 10 Grove Drive, Architectural Review for an Addition and Basement, Pool and Pool House, and Landscaping**

Chair Sill called the field meeting to order at 4:15 p.m.

**ROLL CALL:**

ASCC: Commissioners Breen, Ross, Wilson, and Chair Sill

Vice Chair Koch was absent.

Town Staff: Planning & Building Director Laura Russell, Associate Planner Arly Cassidy

Committee members: Judy Murphy (Conservation), Don Ekstrom (Trails)

Others present

Sonia Dhillon, owner

Jordan Baldwin, Ridgeline Engineering

Kurt Taylor, 35 Grove

Julia Shepardson, 180 Meadowood

Clair Jernick, 33 Grove

Associate Planner Arly Cassidy presented the report regarding the project which consists of an addition and basement to the existing house with a pool and deck adjacent, and a pool house on a 1.0 acre property located at 10 Grove Drive. The proposed plans include a 280 square foot master bedroom suite, 273 square foot basement, a 560 square foot pool and a 311 square foot pool house in the southeast corner of the property. The property is surrounded by single family homes.

Planner Cassidy pointed out that the project had two separate elements, with the addition, basement and pool grouped close to the house at the top of a slope, and the pool house situated down the slope near the road. She added that the pool house is proposed within the 50' Scenic Corridor setback, which is allowed for accessory structures if a finding can be made that the structure is not visible from the road or largely obscured by planting.

Following her presentation, the group toured the site. At the pool location, Planner Cassidy noted that the pool equipment was planned for under the deck where the slope dropped away. At the pool house, the applicant explained that the windows facing toward the road would be screened with the green roof, and that the roofline will follow the grade. Neighbor Nagel noted that there was not a strong relationship between the pool and pool house, to which the applicant replied that the pool orientation had shifted. She added that she didn't want the pool house to present a large bulk, which it would from atop the rise leading up to the pool.

Conservation Chair Murphy noted that the acacia on and off the site currently acted as screening, but the long term plans of the Town are to remove it from the public right of way, which would open up the views of the pool house. She suggested a staggered or phased removal as it would be five to ten years before planted screening grew up. She praised the choice of a low and green roof for the pool house, but stated that the citrus trees proposed for screening were not native and were inappropriate within the Scenic Corridor.

Other neighbors stated concerns about the project, including a shared concern around screening and its maintenance, the impacts of construction on neighbors and trail users, and the

visual impact of larger structures. There was also some discussion around construction parking, with a goal of keeping it out of the drip line of oak trees and off of the trails to the south and west of the property.

Chair Sill stated that Commissioners would offer further comments on the proposal at the regular evening meeting that evening. Members thanked the applicant for participation in the site meeting. The field meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

**ASCC Field Meeting, 40 Sioux Way, Architectural and Site Development Review for a New Residence, Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU), Pool and the Removal of Significant Trees, and Landscaping.**

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

ASCC Present: Commissioners Breen, Ross, Wilson and Chair Sill

Town Staff: Planning and Building Director Laura Russell, Cynthia Richardson Planner and Arly Cassidy Associate Planner.

Others present

Sean Lopes, Project Architect

Tom Klope, Project Landscape Architect

Judith Murphy, Conservation Committee

Marianne Plunder, Conservation Committee

Syrus Madavi – Owner 50 Sioux Way

Planner Cynthia Richardson presented the report regarding the project which consists of a 4,696 square foot home, 1,622 square foot basement a 600 square foot detached garage and a 750 square foot Accessory Dwelling Unit located at 40 Sioux Way. Planner Richardson explained that the project included one expanded light well and the ASCC will need to make a finding that the light well is not visible from off site.

Planner Richardson outlined the three trees that are requested to be removed. Tree #3, #14 and #16 all of which have defects or are in decline.

Following her presentation, commissioners inquired about the skylights on the house and ADU. Sean Lopes showed the commissioners on the plans where the skylights will be placed.

Syrus Madavi, owner of 50 Sioux Way indicated that he has concerns about the obtrusive view into his property and outdoor area. He would like to see a fence and more landscaping along the property line. He also expressed concern about the drainage onto his property and would like to make sure that the new improvements will not make the situation worse. He also expressed concern about the two windows at the end of the ADU facing his property. He would like to see them moved.

Syrus Madavi, invited the group to go onto his property and look at the impacts from the outdoor patio area. Tom Klope, Landscape Architect, indicated that the landscaping between the properties would remain and that additional screen planting would be provided.

Commissioner Ross indicated that the sill height of the two windows in the ADU could be raised. Sean Lopes indicated that this was a good solution and that the owner would be agreeable to this change.

Judith Murphy, Conservation Committee, commented that the property was free of invasive plants and wanted to make sure the contractor kept careful attention to keeping it that way. Marianne Plunder, Conservation Committee had some concerns with the drainage from the site onto Sioux Way.

Planner Richardson commented that the site drainage was reviewed by NV5 and that the increase of drainage will be kept onsite in a detention system.

Commissioner Breen asked about the location of the generator and AC units. Sean Lopes indicated on the plan where they would be located and that they will be sound proofed such that they will meet the Town's noise ordinance.

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.

Planning & Building Director Russell called roll:

Present: ASCC: Commissioners Danna Breen, Dave Ross, and Jane Wilson; Chair Al Sill  
Absent: Vice Chair Koch  
Planning Commission Liaison: Nicholas Targ  
Town Council Liaison: None  
Town Staff: Planning & Building Director Laura Russell; Associate Planner Arly Cassidy; Planner Cynthia Richardson

**ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

None.

**NEW BUSINESS**

- (1) **Architectural Review and Site Development Permit for a New Residence, Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU), Pool, Removal of Significant Trees, and Landscaping, 40 Sioux Way, Pat and Elizabeth Burrell Residence, File # PLN ARCH 03-2018.**

Planner Cynthia Richardson presented the project data and background regarding the proposed project for a new residence, an ADU, a pool, removal of significant trees, and landscaping for the property located at 40 Sioux Way. There was a field meeting at the site earlier this afternoon. Staff recommended approval of the Architectural Review and Site Development Permit, as detailed in the staff report.

Chair Sill invited questions from the Commissioners. Hearing none, Chair Sill invited the applicant to comment.

The project architect offered to answer any questions.

Chair Sill invited questions from the Commissioners.

Commissioner Wilson asked for clarification regarding the number of skylights. The applicant said there will be two skylights over the master closet and one skylight over the hallway.

Commissioner Breen asked for clarification about the chimney caps and asked if they can be reduced. The applicant described the caps and said they will check to see if they can be shorter.

Commissioner Ross asked if the applicant had thought about or reacted to the neighbor's questions and suggestions regarding the ADU. The applicant said they discussed the option to raise the sill heights to approximately 5'-6" (eye level) or to remove the windows facing the neighbor's property line and do a similar pairing of high windows on the other side. They will be

drafting elevations and meeting with the neighbor to see which proposal he prefers.

Commissioner Ross asked if the applicants had given any thought to the distressed redwood trees. Tom Klope, landscape architect, agreed the redwood trees were stressed and not in a natural place. He said the oaks and vegetation may benefit from the removal of those redwoods. In response to Commissioner Ross's question, Mr. Klope did not think the applicants would object to the removal of the trees.

With no further questions, Chair Sill invited comments from the public.

Syrus Madavi, owner of 50 Sioux Way, said they've lived in Portola Valley for 30 years and hope to start some renovations in about two years. The neighbor attended the field meeting this afternoon and wanted to reiterate his concerns tonight. He said he appreciated that his concerns about privacy are being partially addressed. In addition to the windows being relocated, he was appreciative of the shrubbery and planting of live oak trees along the property line. He said his understanding was that if trees are removed, they must be replaced at a certain ratio. He said he understands there should be free travel ways for deer and wildlife but asked if the Commission could consider partial fencing on his side where the view is directly into his bedrooms. He was concerned about drainage because their basement and garage collect water during heavy rains. He said he dug along the property line this past winter, and it was clear that the water was coming from underground as well as from the surface. He said they are considering French drains to prevent water from entering their home as much as possible. He asked if the water from the roof of the proposed ADU, which is the nearest structure to his property, would be draining to the same spot or a different area and if that would be mitigated. He said he is currently renting his home, and the tenants have expressed concern about not having the same peaceful environment they have enjoyed. He said his tenants will likely move once the construction starts, and he will then be in the position of trying to find a new renter while a lot of disturbance and privacy issues are occurring, which will result in significant financial hardship for him. He requested that the privacy issues be addressed at the beginning of the construction rather than the end

With no additional public comment, Chair Sill closed the public hearing and brought the item back to the Commission for discussion.

Commissioner Wilson was supportive of the design. She suggested the amount of impervious surface be reduced, which would also help with any drainage issues. She said she could make the findings to support the lightwell, which is well shielded from the neighbors. She suggested a reduction in lighting at the pool area. She said the landscaping appears overcrowded with the number of plantings around the building. She said the Commission does not normally request screening landscaping be performed at the beginning of a site build but agreed it would be helpful. She agreed the redwoods should be removed.

Commissioner Breen said it is an astonishingly beautiful property, with all four different kinds of oaks and a magnificent habitat. She said the architectural response to the property is wonderful. She said the home design is tasteful and lovely and responds to the ethos of Portola Valley. She was supportive of the material boards. She agreed that the redwoods should be removed, as well as the Cotoneaster, the oleander, and the Hollywood juniper. She said the landscape plan is good but thought the lavender was not appropriate for the property, which should be rough and handsome and respond to the land. She suggested the lower native meadow was not necessary and preferred the gold sweeping pasture. She said, while she preferred no fencing, she could support a split rail but would not support any other kind of fencing. She was

supportive of the light wells. She is not concerned about offsite impacts of skylights. She said changing the sill height was a good idea. She said the lights on the entry post must be removed. She said there is an argument for keeping some of the pines because of the telephone pole, but they should remove as many as possible. She was very supportive of the driveway siting and said the entry experience is gorgeous. She said the last set of lights at the native grass meadow could be eliminated.

Commissioner Ross was supportive of the design and said it responds well to the site. He was supportive of the removal of the three oaks and encouraged removal of all the redwoods and most of the pines. He said a more minimalist and more rough and tumble planting plan would fit better with the location and site and will add the benefit of reducing water use. He appreciated that there was not much exterior lighting. He suggested the possible removal of one pool light. He was supportive of the lightwells. While Commissioner Ross understood the neighbor's desire for greater privacy, he would not support a solid fence at the 50 Sioux property line. He said plantings would make a better buffer because it takes up a greater depth of space and discourages people from getting right up to the property line. He said it is not a heavy use area and not likely that someone would be hanging out around the west side of the ADU. He was concerned about the amount of impervious area. He said, although the gravel driveway is more pervious than the classification suggests, the pool deck area is quite extensive. He suggested the applicant look at what the real usage of that area will be and consider trimming it a bit around the outside and on the ends. He said the grade of the site is pretty much straight down to Sioux, and from the location of the buildings, there is nothing that will be made to flow over the side of the property line. He said his understanding is that the Municipal Code requires that any development not increase offsite water flows which will be reviewed by the engineering team. He said impacts to neighbors during construction happen with every extensive remodel or new build. He said a construction logistics plan is always useful, making sure the construction team understands the limitations on work hours, noise levels, etc. He said this site does not have currently have thistles, dittrichia, or broom, so a lot of attention should be paid to not bringing in invasives.

Chair Sill said the design is wonderful for the site. He was supportive of the materials choices. He said it is an outstanding project and will be spectacular when completed. He was supportive of the lightwells. He was supportive of the proposed tree removals. He agreed the redwoods should be removed. He said doing a little of the landscaping early makes sense, building up a bit more screening for the neighbor's benefit. He would not be supportive of any more fencing than what is already proposed. He would appreciate any reductions to the impervious area, possibly at the pool deck area. He was supportive of the skylights. He said the applicant should be very careful to not generate sounds that impact the neighbor. He was supportive of the landscaping plan, perhaps cutting it back a bit to use less water. He said he agreed they should consider not planting a native meadow and just leaving that area as is. He said the two lights at the entry did not seem appropriate.

Commissioner Breen said she thought there was an opportunity to bring the pool in a bit closer to the house to reduce the impervious surface. She said the landscaping plan should be rougher. She said one of the lovely things about going up the driveway is the expansiveness of the land, and they don't need to have as many islands of planting. She said when the redwood trees come out, there will be more dense foliage because of the additional light that will come in. She would not support more oak plantings.

Mr. Madavi said it appeared that the concerns he voiced fell on deaf ears. He said the Commission's response to his concern about financial hardship was just, "Take it." He said they

dismissed his suggestion about a fence for privacy. He said he agreed the redwood trees should be removed, but it will create a lot of empty spots, and there is no condition in place to replace those trees. He said there are a lot of areas where his house is totally exposed and planting some trees there should be considered appropriate.

The Commission agreed that additional screening materials be planted at the beginning of the project, including taking out the redwoods early in the process so the buffer area can develop while the project is under construction.

Commissioner Ross moved to approve the Architectural Review and Site Development Permit as proposed, with the following additional Conditions: Add additional screen planting between 40 and 50 Sioux and remove the redwoods at the onset of construction, to be reviewed by two ASCC members; reduce the impervious surface by approximately 10 to 15 percent; remove the lights at the entry gate; have only one of the front entry lights functional; minimize the chimney cap height and provide additional information regarding their construction; reduce irrigated planting areas; strongly consider not developing the meadow area; raise the west-facing windows on the ADU so the sill height is at least 5'-6" above the interior floor level or moved to the north elevation, or a combination, in collaboration with the neighbor; and pay particular attention to the construction logistics plan, keeping the parking, staging, storage, etc., away from 50 Sioux. Seconded by Commissioner Breen; the motion carried 4-0.

**(2) Architectural Review for a New Garage and Remodel, 207 Grove Drive, Eyre Residence, File # PLN ARCH 11-2018.**

Associate Planner Cassidy presented the project data and background regarding the proposed project for a new garage and remodel at the property located at 207 Grove Drive. Staff recommended approval of the proposed addition and remodel, subject to the Conditions of Approval, as detailed in the staff report.

Chair Sill invited questions from the Commission.

In response to Commissioner Ross's question, Associate Planner Cassidy confirmed the materials will match the existing materials.

Commissioner Breen asked if the applicants wanted or needed a new garage. The applicant said the existing garage took up one-third of their house space, and her family needs a family room, an entry, and a laundry room. In response to Commissioner Breen's question, the applicant said they absolutely would have been satisfied with having a carport or just parking their cars outside. She said she needed to satisfy the two-car garage requirement and would have much preferred to build an ADU, but high construction costs prevented her from being able to build both a garage and an ADU. Commissioner Breen said the Town needs to understand that issue going forward.

With no further questions, Chair Sill invited public comment. Hearing none, he brought the item back to the Commission for discussion.

Commissioner Breen said she was supportive of the intuitive project and the design.

Commissioner Wilson said it was an intelligent project. She appreciated the project being below the maximum allowed square footage and keeping the impervious area lower than the maximum. She agreed with the reduction in lighting at the front door and garage.



Commissioner Ross was supportive of the project and the matching of materials. He recommended that the pair of sconces at the relocated entry door only have one operative light.

Chair Sill was supportive of the project with the proposed condition on lighting.

Commissioner Breen moved to approve the project as submitted, subject to the attached Conditions of Approval. Seconded by Commissioner Wilson; the motion carried 4-0.

**(3) Architectural Review and Site Development Permit for an Addition with Basement, Pool, New Pool House, and Landscaping, 10 Grove Drive, Dhillon Residence, File # 31-2014.**

Associate Planner Cassidy presented the project data and background regarding the proposed project for an addition and basement, pool and pool house, and landscaping for the property located at 10 Grove Drive. A field visit was held at the site early today. Staff recommended that the ASCC request that the applicant revise their plans and return for further review or approve the project subject to the proposed Conditions of Approval, as detailed in the staff report.

Chair Sill invited questions from the Commissioners.

Commissioner Wilson asked how many structures the Town has historically allowed in a Scenic Corridor setback. Associate Planner Cassidy said this is a fairly irregularly used section of Code and neither she nor staff could recall if it was ever used.

Commissioner Ross asked what types of plants were proposed for the green roof and waterfall planting. Associate Planner Cassidy said they were thyme and wildflowers.

With no additional questions from the Commission, Chair Sill invited comments by the applicant. The applicant explained some of the history of the tilted roof and vertical gardens.

Chair Sill invited questions from the Commissioners.

Commissioner Wilson asked the applicants if they had considered any other siting for the pool house. The applicant said 30 of Stanford's architectural design students and six architects from the United States and Japan worked on the design.

Commissioner Ross asked how drainage and run off would be handled in the open corridor area that splits the pool house. The applicant said there will be a need for a subdrain behind the wall to capture anything that doesn't percolate through the compacted dirt.

With no further questions from the Commission, Chair Sill invited public comment.

Curt Taylor, 35 Grove Drive. Mr. Taylor supported the plan in general. He said he appreciated the mitigations for any intrusiveness to the surrounding areas. He said he was concerned about construction staging, which is difficult along Grove Drive with no parking on that part of the road. He said there is danger of head-on collisions if cars have to move out of their proper lane. He said the nearest viable parking would be on Grove Court. He hoped a condition would be made limiting the number of vehicles that can be present at any one time.

Judith Murphy, 8 Portola Green Circle. Ms. Murphy said it is a unique, interesting, and amazing design. She said she loved the vertical garden wall. She said the pool house location is

problematic. She said there is a 50-foot setback along the Scenic Corridor, and it seems the Town is sacrificing the openness of the Scenic Corridor in order to give the applicants openness within their site, and she is not sure those two are equivalent balances. She said if an exception is made for an accessory structure, there should be a valid reason for the exception. She said while she does like the planted wall, it is still a wall. She requested the project not be approved without a specific planting plan. She said the removal of all of the acacias in the right-of-way will leave this building very exposed. She said four citrus trees in a row, while appropriate around the pool, are not appropriate for the Scenic Corridor. She said the lot is full of invasives.

With no additional public comment, Chair Sill brought the item back to the Commission for discussion.

Commissioner Ross said the project is intriguing with distinctly different pieces with very different characters. He said he believes it is appropriate. He said the addition to the house will be essentially invisible upon completion and will look like it was always intended to be there. He suggested that instead of reinstalling the two existing light fixtures from the house that they use dark sky compliant light fixtures that are not visible from the road. He said the pool is interesting with so much of it above ground, requiring a significant amount of engineering to retain the water and make it seismically safe. He said he liked the concept of the roof plantings. He recommended eliminating the citrus trees along Portola Road and not planting anything there. He said he does not believe every segment of the Scenic Corridor is created equal, and he does not think of the eastern view between Brookside and Willowbrook looking north as being all that scenic. He said over time, as the principles of it being a scenic corridor get improved, removing some of the non-native acacias and opening the view up a bit, everything that can be achieved will be achieved. He said he does not see this building as problematic for the Scenic Corridor and is supportive of this being in the Scenic Corridor setback in its current design, as long as the citrus trees are not planted. He suggested the planting mix blend in and not be something that stands out.

Commissioner Breen was supportive of the addition, the basement at the house, and the swimming pool. She said the design is exciting. She agreed the light fixtures should be changed to shielded fixtures. She said the pool house building is exciting. She cautioned that wildflowers are difficult and challenging. She said the project feels incomplete at this point and needs to come back for full Commission review. She wants to see a detailed landscape plan that addresses the screening issue. She said she cannot make the first finding that this building is going to be screened without seeing the mitigation. She said the building will be too exposed from the trail and from the Scenic Corridor. The logs on the property line need to be addressed, as well as the fencing plan. She said the Town doesn't support a fencing situation that traps animals. She said the proposal is for English laurel on the property line but landscaping on the Scenic Corridor should be California natives. She is not supportive of the citrus trees.

Commissioner Wilson was supportive of the house addition and the pool. She said the lights should be changed to dark sky compliant. She said she cannot make the finding for the pool house going into the 50-foot setback and would like to see it in a completely different area. She said the Town needs to hold the Scenic Corridor as sacrosanct for not building within it. She does not support citrus trees on the Scenic Corridor.

Chair Sill said the design work is great, and he is supportive of the addition to the house. He was supportive of the pool. He said the pool house has an incredibly creative design, but he cannot support it being in the setback. He said the guidelines are clear that the project must be consistent with the character of the other plants in the area, and this proposal is not. He said the

citrus trees are not consistent. He said the pool house needs to be moved, or they need to see a very good screening and landscaping plan. The applicant said she can work with the Commission on the screening plan. She said if they push the pool house back, it will be more visible because it will be higher. Commissioner Breen said if they put the pool house closer to the pool, it may also provide better acoustical mitigation for the pool area. The applicant asked for suggestions for screening plants. Commissioner Breen suggested they refer to the Scenic Corridor plant list. The applicant said they have that list but asked if the Commission had any specific suggestions. Chair Sill said it is more important how they screen the building from the road and the trail, and the applicants should come up with a combination of plants that look natural and reduce the visibility of the building. Commissioner Breen said when all of the acacia are removed, the building will be extremely visible. She said the applicant needs to provide a plan to recreate the planting and hide the building.

The applicant asked if the pool house would be less of an issue if it was outside of the 50-foot setback. Chair Sill said he would be more comfortable with it but would still have to see a planting plan.

In response to the applicant's question, Commissioner Ross said one option would be relocating the pool house outside of the Scenic Corridor setback, eliminating the need for special findings. He said attention to the landscaped areas between the pool house and the road, including fencing, may require creation of a landscape plan or consultation with a landscape architect. He said the review process would stay open for that process, coming back to the Commission when that part of it is complete. Associate Planner Cassidy said there is a two-year expiration.

The applicant expressed concern that aesthetically, she is concerned about the height of the pool house if it is moved. Commissioner Breen said it may be easier to address that with a landscape plan, a good fencing plan, and removing all of the wood on the property line. Chair Sill said the height should not be thought of as only 4 feet because it has more of a footprint than just looking at it straight on. He said the building should not impact anyone along the trail or along Portola Road, so it should be thought of more holistically.

Associate Planner Cassidy summarized that the applicant should look at the native plantings in the design guidelines, understand that if the pool house is in the Scenic Corridor, it should not be visible, and that any planting should substantially block even the green wall. She said if the structure is moved behind the 50-foot setback, the requirement that it be obscured no longer applies, but there remains the desire that planting and screening be provided that fits in with the Scenic Corridor.

Commissioner Ross moved to partially approve the project as to the pool, the addition to the house, the changes associated directly with that area of the project, and changing all of the lights on the Portola Road side to dark-sky compliant fixtures, including all of the Conditions of Approval attached except the conditions for findings regarding the accessory structure in the Scenic Corridor. Approval was deferred on the pool house pending more design development and details. Seconded by Commissioner Breen; the motion carried 4-0.

Planning & Building Director Russell said if it is going to be broken out as a separate approval, it needs to be clear which specific conditions of approval apply. She said the applicant would have the option moving forward to pursue only the addition and the pool if the pool house is segmented. Associate Planner Cassidy said the current condition requires that the ASCC review the landscape plan. The Commission agreed that the four citrus trees on the south side of the pool were acceptable.

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

Chair Sill and Commissioner Ross reviewed Alpine Hills's request change to their roofing material from standing seam metal to Duralast.

Commissioner Ross approved minor lighting changes at 180 Golden Oak.

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

Associate Planner Cassidy shared articles of interest with the Commissioners – “What will the footpath of the future look like?” and “American Cities are Drowning in Car Storage.”

Planning & Building Director Russell said she was happy to meet the Commission today and was happy and excited to be here in Portola Valley.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

### **(5) ASCC Meeting of June 25, 2018**

Commissioner Breen moved to approve the June 25, 2018, minutes as submitted. Seconded by Commissioner Ross, the motion passed 4-0.

**ADJOURNMENT** [9:12 p.m.]