

**CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

Chair Taylor called the Planning Commission special teleconference meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Planning & Building Director Russell called the roll.

Present: Planning Commissioners: Goulden, Hasko, Targ; Vice Chair Kopf-Sill; Chair Taylor  
Absent: None.  
Town Council: John Richards  
Town Staff: Laura Russell, Planning & Building Director; Dylan Parker, Planner; Cara Silver, Town Attorney

**ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

None.

**NEW BUSINESS**

- (1) **Preliminary Review of a Proposal to Expand the Existing Fire Station including an Amendment to the Municipal Code to Allow Public Facilities within the R-1 Zoning Districts, a Conditional Use Permit Amendment, and Preliminary Architectural and Site Development Review, 135 Portola Road, Woodside Fire Protection District Station #8, File # PLN ZONA01-2021 & PLN ARCH22- 2019**

Planner Parker explained that the item is a preliminary review of the Municipal Code and Conditional Use Permit Amendment request for the existing fire station at 135 Portola Road. He described the meeting format as follows:

- Staff presentation, followed by questions from the Commission for staff
- Applicant presentation, followed by questions from the Commission for the applicant
- Public comments
- Commission Discussion

Planner Parker led the staff presentation and described the project's location, the project's proposed expansion, the parcel's zoning history, Commission considerations, staff's recommendation and next steps, as detailed in the staff report.

Planner Parker said that on November 23, 2020, the ASCC conducted a preliminary view of the project proposal. Public comments at the meeting expressed concern relating to the building locations, landscaping, lighting, parking, and on-site vehicular circulation. In the staff presentation to the ASCC, staff noted that there are outstanding issues related to floor area, parking requirements, and overall code compliance. The ASCC moved to refer the proposal to the Planning Commission because the issues presented by staff were "gating" issues that would determine key components of the project. The ASCC expressed strong interest in having the project come back to them once the issues are resolved.

Commissioner Goulden requested that Planner Parker read staff's Commission consideration questions into the record. Planner Parker announced that the Commission should consider the following:

- Should the code amendment be for all public buildings or just the fire station?
- Is it appropriate for development standards to be established for the fire station through the CUP process?
- Should any additional modifications be made to the proposed amendments to accurately capture the request at hand?
- Is the proposed number of parking spaces appropriate for their use and operations?
- Should the spaces dedicated to equipment storage be considered parking?

Commissioner Goulden assumed that the new apparatus bay would meet the federal law requirements in terms of the secure of the equipment. Planner Parker said that the proposed expansion complies with current state and federal regulations.

Chair Taylor suggested that Commissioners hold applicant questions for the applicant presentation.

Vice Chair Kopf-Sill asked staff to explain question number two and number three. Planning & Building Director Russell said that for the fire station, the underlying Zoning District standards would not apply. The Planning Commission, or whoever grants the CUP, needs to set the Development Standards for the use. In regards to consideration number three, she explained that the question is meant to capture any community concerns and questions the Commission has about how to approach the Code Amendment.

Commissioner Targ stated that the amendment made to the ordinance in 1987 has caused the issue that the Commission is now facing and that it is unclear why the “public building” language was removed. Planner Parker confirmed that is correct.

Commissioner Targ asked how the ordinance regime worked in 1987. Planning & Building Director Russell said that in 1987 there was no definition for “public building” and staff did not know why the section regarding “public buildings” was removed.

Commissioner Targ asked if the Commission decided to default back to the language from 1987, how would the process function. Planning & Building Director Russell predicted that the use was permitted and not a conditional use in 1987. She said there would be no provision to allow the Development Standards to vary from the R-1 Zoning District.

Commissioner Hasko asked what other public buildings will be impacted under consideration number one. Planning & Building Director Russell answered that staff is not aware of any other public buildings that may be proposed. The reason staff drafted the amendment as such is because it is common best practice for Zoning Code writing. She said that the R-E District does have public buildings in its code, and staff is trying to create symmetry with the R-E District, but there is no definition listed in the R-E District for public buildings.

Commissioner Hasko asked what are the implications of the spaces being considered parking versus something else in terms of equipment storage. Planning & Building Director Russell said that it is a policy question of how the Commission would like to define that. She said that it does not come up often, but should be addressed.

Commissioner Hasko noticed that in the introductory paragraph for the findings it says that there are six mandatory findings and two additional findings that only occur in special situations. She questioned whether there is no reference to the other non-mandatory finding because it is not applicable. Planning & Building Director Russell confirmed that it is not applicable and that it applies to wireless facilities only.

Vice Chair Kopf-Sill inquired why in 1987 the zoning was changed from R-E to R-1 and where those zones are in Town. Planner Parker said that the historical records are unclear why the zoning change was made. The adjacent zone is an R-E/1a, and he predicted it was made that way because it was the best fit for that parcel at the time. In terms of R-1 Districts, he said that there are zones near Corte Madera Road, Santa Maria Avenue, and the Wyndham Drive roundabout.

Chair Taylor asked what the difference is between R-1 and R-1a. Planner Parker said that 1a refers to the minimum lot size for the district so for example, 1a equals one acre.

Chair Taylor inquired if the fire station could be rezoned instead of doing the Code Amendment. Planning & Building Director Russell said that is an option, but staff felt that was not the best option, and it is not what the applicant has applied for.

Chair Taylor predicted that if public buildings are allowed in the R-1 Zone, the CUP process will still be required for any public buildings in R-1. Planning & Building Director Russell confirmed that is correct.

Carter Warr, CJW Architecture, mentioned that the alternative is to mirror the adjacent property's zoning of CC for the fire station.

Chair Taylor asked that once the Commission concludes the item, if the project is going to the Town Council for approval and if that is standard practice. Planning & Building Director Russell shared that because of the Zoning Text Amendment proposal, it has to go to Town Council for approval.

Chair Taylor invited the applicant to provide their presentation.

Rob Lindner, Fire Chief of Woodside Fire, said that he has been with the Fire Department for 26-years. The problems that the existing first stations hold is that it does not comply with Department of Homeland Security requirements, does not comply with modern fire station safety measures, it does not comply with accessibility code requirements, and it does not accommodate the current needs. As staffing has increased at the station, he said that offices have been turned into bedrooms. He said that there have always been three apparatuses located at the fire station, and one of them has been located outside and not safely secured. He said that parking is insufficient, and often folks have to park on the road during shift changes or when guided tours are being given. He said that Station #8 has three to five staff members usually, and cadets are only sent to the station for day shifts because there are not enough sleeping quarters. He mentioned that along with the three apparatus vehicles, there is also a communication trailer housed on-site as well as a chipper, a truck, and the support trailer for the Chipper Program. He said that training exercises are also done on-site, and the parking lot located near the training area cannot be used for cars due to safety concerns and possible property damage. He said that the Fire Department has held several neighborhood meetings. After hearing concerns from the neighbors, the proposal no longer has a designated office for the Sheriff's Department, the drive-through lane has been relocated to the front of the property, additional parking has been moved to the front of the building, exterior lighting has been removed from the new apparatus bay back wall, and the existing landscape will be retained.

Mr. Warr compared the existing site plan to the proposed site plan and listed where the differences are. He said the major change from the public's perspective is the removal of the landscape in the front of the facility, the instillation of the drive-through driving lane and additional parking in front.

Vice Chair Kopf-Sill said she thought the shifts were 24-hours, but Fire Chief Lindner mentioned that they are 48-hours. Chief Lindner clarified that the shifts are 24-hour shifts, but the shift design is set up to where the same shift works two shifts in a row.

Commissioner Hasko asked what equipment will be housed in the parking spaces and why parking spaces are being used for storage. Fire Chief Lindner answered that the communication trailer is the piece of equipment that will be housed there as well as other equipment that has wheels.

Commissioner Hasko asked why is it important to remove the existing redwood tree and have the drive-through lane at the front of the building. Fire Chief Lindner said that the proposal is responding to the neighbor's feedback. He said parking cannot be located on the egress side of the structure due to training. Mr. Warr said that the neighbors want a vegetative screen in the back instead of vehicles.

Commissioner Targ asked what the proposal's green rate is. Mr. Warr answered that the LEED Certification is difficult to obtain for a very small addition, and he said he is not sure what the project's green rating is.

Vice Chair Kopf-Sill asked what the percentage is for having three people in the station, four people, and five people. Fire Chief Lindner said that it varies from day to day.

Commissioner Targ said that the primary issue for parking occurs during shift changes, and there is a potential to have 10 to 12 people coming and going from the station at one time. Fire Chief Lindner answered that is correct, but when tours are allowed again, the parking issue will escalate.

Commissioner Targ asked if there has been any consideration in having a lease agreement with the adjoining office park. Fire Chief Lindner said that adjacent parking lots are usually full, and it has never been explored.

Commissioner Targ said that the parking lot during the day at Robert's is frequently not full and he did not know if there is a way to synchronize changes. Fire Chief Lindner said that having the additional parking spaces as well as the drive-through lane allows folks to park safely and not on Portola Road. Mr. Warr said that visiting engines are at Fire Station #8 regularly because the station has to be manned at all times.

Commissioner Targ said he is sympathetic regarding the fire station not having enough available parking during peak hours for safety reasons, but he felt that the proposal is making a significant change. He said that there is an existing, frequently empty parking lot adjacent, and he wanted to know if there is an opportunity for a parking lease agreement with that lot. Mr. Warr said he could not speak to that because he is not the landlord.

Chair Taylor said that in terms of the drive-through, the truck is barely off the road before it is in the drive-through. He asked if there was any exploration in inverting the parking spaces versus the drive-through and then save the redwood tree by losing a parking spot. Mr. Warr answered that there are three redwood trees in the front of the fire station, and if the Commission desires it, further exploration can take place to save the one tree that is proposed to be removed.

Chair Taylor said that when looking at the diagram, there is a lot of asphalt, parking spaces, trucks, and driveways right on the road. He said he would appreciate it if that were softened, but acknowledged that the conversation should be held with the ASCC. Mr. Warr agreed but said that the largest constraint is the limited turning radiuses of the vehicles.

With no further questions, Chair Taylor called for public comment

Betsy Morgenthaler said that the presentation was enriching, and she appreciated it. She said that the proposal to have the fire station zoned as CC as Mr. Warr had mentioned is an interesting idea. She

asked if that would use a lot of staff time to make that change and if staff had any further comments regarding that idea.

Rusty Day said that the improvements as proposed are justified and necessary. He said that the proposal responds well to the concerns that neighbors have raised. He did not agree with the proposed Code Amendment and that there was no discussion at the ASCC of a proposed Code Amendment. He said that there is an implication that in the R-E District, a recognized exemption for Conditional Use is public buildings, and he did not believe that is correct. He said in Section 18.12.030 of the Town's Code there is no public building exception in Conditional Uses. He said he supported a change that allowed a Conditional Use in the R-1 Zone for 24/hour continuous fire protection, but opening it up to an undefined, unspecified classification of public building and leaving it open for future interpretation is a mistake. He strongly recommended that the Commission reject the Code Amendment. He said that the Code Amendment was not brought to the public's attention until after the time period for public comment had passed.

Chair Taylor said that the public can engage in the process at the Town Council hearing as well.

David Cardinal said the question the Commission should answer is what does the Fire District need to protect the town and if the Commission feels that this is not the right site. Then the Town should buy them the site so that the Fire District can function in the manner it is intended to.

Chair Taylor said that the Commission has to find the right balance, but there is no question that there is strong community support for the Fire Department.

Bob Schultz said he is a neighbor to Fire Station #8. He said that the design team has done an excellent job in thinking outside the box in terms of parking. The new location helps mitigate car noise for the neighbors. He said he is strongly against having the fire station be zoned CC. He said that the Code Amendment should use the words fire station instead of public building. He said he did not want to see a high-traffic public building such as a library or a police station next to his home. He said that screening and drainage is important. He requested that the applicant have complete landscaping and drainage plans by the next ASCC meeting and that the fencing and landscaping be completed before the final building inspection.

Kristi Corley said that the Code Amendment should say fire station and not public building. She said she supported the expansion of the fire station.

Jan Mountjoy said she shares the property line at the rear of the fire station, and she has been tending the landscaping along the property line for the last 40-years. She thanked all of the parties involved in the project for saving the landscaping. She asked the Commission to make it permanent that the landscaped border be protected from removal if the fire station expands in the future.

Chair Taylor said that the CUP process is the right process to request that the border be protected. He said that the Fire Department has been very responsive to neighbors.

Ms. Mountjoy said that redwood trees threaten water lines, pavement, buildings and she did not want the project team to feel bad about removing one of the trees.

Chair Taylor brought the item back to the Commission for discussion.

Commissioner Goulden said that the fire station is intended to be on the site for a long time, and there is no debate on whether the fire station should remain on the site or not. He said that the fire station is in desperate need of improvements. He said that because the fire station is controlled by a Conditional

Use Permit, that gives the Town the ability to control what happens there. He said that if public buildings is added to the code, that does not mean that things are automatically approved. Folks can apply for a Conditional Use Permit and go through the process. He said based on what he's heard so far, he supported the inclusion of public building instead of fire station into the code. He felt that way because the code should be consistent. He said either way, the project should move forward, regardless of what label is placed on it in the code. He said that having equipment housed on-site makes sense, and the proposed placement on the site plans makes sense. He said that because this is a fire station, it needs a lot of impervious surfaces, and he supported the proposed additional parking. He felt that the location of those parking spaces that house equipment should be left to the ASCC.

Vice Chair Kopf-Sill said she agrees that the location of the fire station works and did not want the station moved to another site. She said she supports the revision of the code, and she felt that making the language general is more appropriate than calling out specific uses. She said often the Planning Commission discusses parking as a minimum number. She said that she wanted to see the parking equal to the number of cars that are regularly there, and she suggested that a minimum of 14 parking spaces be included in the CUP. She suggested that the ASCC discuss if more spaces should be allowed. She said she supports the concept of sharing parking spaces with nearby businesses.

Chair Taylor asked if Vice Chair Kopf-Sill is proposing the CUP have a minimum requirement of 14 parking spaces. Vice Chair Kopf-Sill said the minimum should be 14, and if the ASCC or applicant wants to go higher in number then that is fine.

Commissioner Targ said he did not want the fire station to move and that concept is not up for discussion. He said that the Code Amendment should be broad and not specific. He said that the requirements regarding the CUP Findings are adequate and should keep things in check. He said that the amount of impervious surface is high as well as there is concern regarding drainage issues. He felt like there is a lack of attention to Green Building techniques, and he said he would care less about having more vehicles if more pervious surfaces are used. He said that becomes a Planning Commission issue because of the CUP context. He said he did not have an immediate solution, but it is something he will be looking for when the item comes back to the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Goulden asked if Commissioner Targ is proposing that the pervious surfaces be brought to a future Planning Commission meeting. Commissioner Targ said that he was not sure what Green Building techniques are being used, but he agreed with Mr. Warr that it is challenging to receive a LEED certificate for remodels. He said he wanted to see additional attention made to soften the facility's footprint as well as address issues of drainage. He said that multiple outcomes can be achieved in a variety of different ways.

Commissioner Hasko said she shares the same concern regarding pervious and impervious spaces as Commissioner Targ. She said she heard justification for two of the four parking spaces because they may house heavy vehicles. She said that the ASCC and the applicant will have to figure out what is needed to support a vehicle. She said she did not hear the justification for 18 parking spaces, but is open to discussing it in the future. She said she appreciated Fire Chief Lindner and his team. She appreciated that outreach to the neighbors and that the proposal reflects the neighbor's requests. She said she wanted to keep the code changes narrow because she did not see obvious places in town where broader language in the code is needed and for that reason, she supported the Code Amendment to read fire station. She said the front entrance of the site looks stark in terms of landscaping. She said she wants to see the entrance softened some more and requests that the ASCC come up with some recommendations on how to break up the pavement. She said she wants to see the rationale behind the removal of the redwood tree. She said she supported the project and looks forward to seeing it when it comes back.

Chair Taylor invited Mr. Warr to speak about LEED and the impervious surface concerns.

Mr. Warr said that the issue with pervious pavers and fire stations is the fact that heavy vehicles cause a rolling effect which creates a muddling of the ground. He said that pervious surfaces located where light vehicles will be driving has been very successful. He said that the site is required to retain, detain, and absorb all of the additional rainwater runoff so that there is no increase of water runoff off the site.

Chair Taylor said the Commission strongly supports the Fire Department. He said that where lighter vehicles are being parked, he wanted to see those areas use Green Building materials. He said the CUP Process is very powerful, and he is okay with the process being broader if there are other public buildings. He asked if this is allowed for all public buildings, what other buildings are in the code, what other public buildings is staff trying to be consistent with, and would a fire station use in the R-1 District create further inconsistencies for the R-E Zone? He said he foresaw the CUP process maintaining the Town's values, but he wanted to understand the consequences.

Planning & Building Director Russell said that a motion is not needed for a preliminary review. She said that staff has received substantial feedback from the Commission regarding the Code Amendment and asked if the Commission felt comfortable with staff working with the City Attorney's office to consider all the ideas for the Code Amendment. After further analysis, staff would come back to the Commission with the solution that makes the most sense.

Chair Taylor said that sounds reasonable and he agreed that the fire station project should move to the ASCC for review.

Commissioner Hasko said she did not understand Planning & Building Director Russell's proposal. She said the Commission should have two options to look at when the item is brought back. Planning & Building Director Russell said that the feedback from the Commission was divergent, and so staff needs time to collect the information and present that to the Commission in a way that allows the Commission to give the appropriate feedback.

Chair Taylor said he is hoping for a fast process on what the Code Amendment should say; whether it be a fire station or public building.

Commissioner Targ said that understanding the standard form of language for public buildings used through the State of California would be helpful to know.

Commissioner Goulden agreed that the Commission wants the fire station project to move forward and the only debate is on the details of the Code Amendment.

## **(2) Housing Element Annual Report**

Planning & Building Director Russell said that the Town has a Housing Element that is a required element of the General Plan. She said that state law has specific requirements related to Housing Elements on how they are adopted, when they are adopted, and how they are reported on. She said there are also implications for different state laws in terms of whether the goals outlined in the Housing Element have been met. She said there has been discussion at the Town Council related to the upcoming Housing Element update and that the report before the Commission is related to the current Housing Element cycle. She said the report covers the timeframe from 2015 to 2023. She said that the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) is the number of housing units required to plan for during the Housing Element's 8-years cycle. She said that requirements come from state law and the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). She said each year staff conducts a

report on the Housing Element and the report consists of the number of building permits that have been issued during the calendar year for net new housing units. She said historically, staff has presented the report to the Planning Commission as well as to the Town Council. She said after the Commission reviews the report, staff will present the report to Town Council and then submit the report to HCD by the deadline of April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021. She explained that there are two components of the report. The first is the number of housing units that have been constructed and the second is a report on the Housing Element Programs and status updates. She said that the current RHNA allocation is 64 net new housing units for the cycle. The Town has received four building permits that were issued in 2020 which consisted three Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) and six units of Affiliated Housing at the Priory. She said that for the six-unit project, one of the units is a deed-restricted low-income unit and the other five units are for faculty and staff which are anticipated to fall under the moderate-income category. She said that those permits have been incorporated, and the Town has a total number of 88 units for the RHNA cycle. She said the total RHNA allocation has been exceeded, but in terms of income level, the Town is short of eight units for the low-income level and one unit for the moderate-income level.

Commissioner Targ asked how many units are very-low-income units. Planning & Building Director Russell answered that the Town has passed the RHNA Allocation of 21 and has 32 units that are very low-income units.

Commissioner Targ asked if the very low-income target is exceeded, can that be counted for higher-level units. Town Attorney Silver said that staff will investigate it but she cautioned that the Housing Element requires a range of affordability, and if folks qualify as low, they cannot live in very low-income units.

Planning & Building Director Russell continued with the presentation. She said the progress on the Housing Element Programs is listed in the staff report and that there has been no significant change to the categories over the last year.

Commissioner Goulden asked if the charts in the staff report are the State-mandated charts and Planning & Building Director Russell said yes.

Vice Chair Kopf-Sill said that she saw that some of the permits issued in 2020 may not be built even if they are approved. Planning & Building Director Russell said the requirement is to plan for the units and what counts towards the RHNA allocation are issued building permits. She said staff also provides a report on the entitlements as well as the building finals.

Vice Chair Kopf-Sill asked since the Town passed its RHNA allocation for this cycle, if that helps the Town for the next cycle. Planning & Building Director Russell said that it does not carry over, but it does help in terms of ADU production.

With no further questions, Chair Taylor invited public comment.

Rita Comes asked if the Town has any large infrastructure projects that will support the future's RHNA allocation.

Kristi Corley said that RHNA is an unfunded mandate, and she encourages the Commission and Town Council to remind the State that an unfunded mandate means that cities are going to strongly pursue available grants, and there are not enough grants available.

Chair Taylor brought the item back to the Commission for comment. Seeing none, Chair Taylor closed Agenda Item Two.



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

### **(3) Commission Reports**

Commissioner Goulden said he attended several ASCC meetings, but he said they were standard meetings.

Chair Taylor said he also attended several ASCC meetings.

### **(4) Staff Reports**

None.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

### **(5) Planning Commission Meeting of February 17, 2021**

Commissioner Hasko said that the staff report mentioned the donation program that Town Manager Dennis is leading, but the staff report does not specify what the donation program is for. Chair Taylor said it's the PV Donate Program. Commissioner Hasko said that the program name should be referenced.

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

Vice Chair Kopf-Sill moved to approve the minutes of the February 17, 2021, meeting, Seconded by Commissioner Goulden, the motion carried 5-0.

### **ADJOURNMENT [9:40 p.m.]**

Commissioner Goulden moved to adjourn. Seconded by Vice Chair Kopf-Sill, the motion carried 5-0.