

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Ross called the special teleconference-only meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Planning & Building Director Laura Russell called roll:

Present: ASCC: Commissioners Kenny Cheung, Megan Koch, and Al Sill; Chair Dave Ross and Vice Chair Jane Wilson

Absent:

Planning Commission Liaison: Anne Kopf-Sill

Town Council Liaison: Sarah Wernikoff

Town Staff: Planning & Building Director Laura Russell; Assistant Planner Dylan Parker; Town Manager Jeremy Dennis

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

NEW BUSINESS

- (1) **Review of a Proposal to Expand the Existing Fire Station including an Amendment to the Municipal Code, a Conditional Use Permit Amendment, Architectural and Site Development Review, 135Portola Road, Woodside Fire Protection District Station #8, File # PLN_ZONA01-2021 & PLN_ARCH22-2019**

Assistant Planner Parker shared the site background and surrounding zoning and plan designation for the project. He gave a recap of the November 23, 2020, ASCC Preliminary Review and the March 17, 2021, Planning Commission Preliminary Review. He presented the proposal as detailed in the staff report, including the site plan and floor plan. The main reason for the expansion is to provide bedroom accommodations for five staff members at the station at any one time. Currently there are only three bedrooms, so two of the staff members have to sleep on cots in makeshift bedrooms. The Sheriff's substation has been removed from the floorplan at the request of neighbors at the November meeting.

Assistant Planner Parker presented the sections and elevations, noting on the west elevation that the rollup doors are solid to minimize the light spill from the new apparatus bay. The North elevation did not change from the previous iteration. The South elevation illustrates louvered doors instead of windows in one section. On the East elevation, the apparatus doors now show porthole windows in place of the previous full glass windows. He presented the grading plan, primarily for the new front parking areas and internal circulation driveways. Assistant Planner Parker went over the colors and materials proposed for the project, noting the wall sconce was removed from the proposal due to the installation being noncompliant with the Town's outdoor lighting policy. He described the tree removal proposal as detailed in the Arborist Report (attachment six), in addition to six trees not included in the Arborist Report, but requested by neighbors' landscape architect.

He described the Landscaping Plan, including additional screening as requested by the adjacent neighbor. All plantings at the rear of the property will remain at the request of neighbors. The applicant has moved the parking areas to the front of the station in consideration

of neighbor concerns. He described the new planting areas as shown in the landscape plan. Regarding the new front parking area, the applicant is proposing permeable pavers for this area.

Based on the Planning Commission feedback regarding the proposed increase of onsite impervious surface areas, the applicant is proposing permeable pavers for the entire portion of the new front parking area and the two parking spaces in the left-hand rear portion of the property. The Conservation Committee was generally supportive of the proposal, although they expressed concerns related to the front parking area, the plant selections, fencing and tree removal. Their comments are in attachment 10, for ASCC's consideration, as well as applicant's efforts to address neighbor concerns and deliberation of the proposed landscaping plan. Regarding the lighting plan, the only revision was deletion of two wall sconces on the rear, on the new apparatus bay, due to noncompliance with the Town's outdoor lighting policy with respect to placement since there are no entry doors on this wall façade, only windows.

As part of required noticing process, notice to neighbors within 1,000 feet of the project were sent advising of the ASCC review. No public comments had been received at the time of the packet distribution; however, comments received after the deadline have been forwarded to the ASCC. Assistant Planner Parker listed the findings the ASCC must make in order to approve the architectural and site development permit applications under consideration. He described the three main aspects of the project and the underlying criteria or guidance for each aspect. Staff is confident that findings within the zoning code and the design guidelines could be made. If the ASCC determines it cannot make any of these findings, it is permitted to impose additional conditions, so that such findings may be met.

Assistant Planner Parker presented some considerations for the ASCC, outlined the next steps, including public comments; consideration of any necessary design changes to conform to the Town's policies; providing recommendations on the design; or drafting of additional conditions of approval to ensure compliance. The ASCC's comments will be forwarded to the Planning Commission who will then consider the application. All neighbors within 1,000 feet of the site will be notified of the hearing. The Planning Commission will make a formal recommendation to the Town Council on all aspects of the project. That Town Council meeting will also be noticed to all neighbors within 1,000 of the property. Information will be updated on the Town's website.

Chair Ross invited questions of staff.

Commissioner Koch asked how the pervious pavers impact the impervious surface. Assistant Planner Parker replied that only geo-block is discounted in terms of impervious surfaces, so the totals do not change. The Planning Commission's recommendation was geared towards softening the area. The permeable pavers wouldn't discount or reduce the proposed impervious surfaces. It may be an issue of rig weight requirement because it is being shared for the rig circulation. Commissioner Koch remarked it's more of an aesthetic change. Planning and Building Director Russell added there would also be sustainability and environmental benefits of having a permeable paver as well, so even though it's not counted towards impervious surface, it does have value in that regard.

Chair Ross asked if the parking is based on zoning or occupancy requirement or based on actual needs. Planning and Building Director Russell said there are certain uses listed in the table in the zoning code with parking standards. Those uses that are not listed, the Planning Commission has the authority to set the parking spaces. In this case, it was based on the expected need, based on operations the Fire District has laid out in their assessment of what the need is. It is subject to Planning Commission approval and, in this case, Town Council

approval since they will review everything. The Planning Commission discussion was around trying to have the right number of parking spaces; that topic is subject to discussion or interpretation.

Chair Ross asked if the current number is based on the maximized use – overlap of firefighter staff coming and going, needing multiple parking places for short periods of time. Are any significant numbers of parking spaces going to be used the majority of the time? Planning and Building Director Russell's and staff's understanding is that it does cover the shift change when both shifts are onsite. But it would also cover office users, occasional members of the public, and occasional special occasions. It is not their understanding that it would be empty most of the time, but would accommodate shift change.

Chair Ross asked regarding Portola Road as a designated scenic corridor, if both sides of the road are part of the scenic corridor or only the west/south side. Planning and Building Director Russell responded that her reading is that both sides are in the corridor. Staff reviewed the Portola Road Scenic Corridor Plan in terms of its application to this project. They found very little related to this project, other than to say that this part of Portola Road does have more development. She added that this was a question they received in preparation for the meeting, and she offered to share sections of the Plan on the screen or email it to the ASCC members. Chair Ross said he is satisfied with the response that the general intent of the Scenic Corridor Plan was to cover both sides of the road, and he had been working from the assumption that both sides of the road are intended to be part of it. Assistant Planner Parker added that the front setback for the Scenic Corridor for Portola Road is 50 feet and that the fire station building is not going further into the front setback. At 49 feet, 9 inches, it is three inches short of it. The Ordinance has a provision that says structures that existed prior to or as of the date of the Plan's adoption, August 1991, which do not comply are not subject to the provisions. So, certain things are allowed to encroach if they existed prior to the Ordinance, and this is why not much time was spent analyzing the scenic corridor, given the front setback wasn't changing and the expansion was within the existing footprint, setbacks for the RN1 zoning, and provisions in the Code.

Hearing no more questions from the Commissioners, Chair Ross invited the applicant to comment on the proposal.

Woodside Fire Protection District Chief Lindner shared a PowerPoint presentation similar to one presented last year but modified based on feedback received from the last meeting and the Planning Commission meeting. The building itself was initially built almost 45 years ago, remodeled 25-plus years ago, and now does not comply with Department of Homeland Security requirements and recommendations, some safety measures, accessibility code, and it is just not fitting the current needs and potential future needs of the District. Currently, there are one office and three bedrooms in the building. Minimum staffing is three firefighters. The one office is available to do reports, et cetera, but staffing can increase to four or five individuals. Over the years when there were four or five personnel, the office became, and other areas became, makeshift bedrooms. Space for training, reports and meeting with public had to move to more general locations, such as the dayroom area off of the kitchen. Chief Lindner shared that the turnouts, the bunker gear, are currently kept in the apparatus room, and over the course of time with cancer awareness, etc., they have learned that with exposure to diesel and the environment in the apparatus room, they have the projected risk of causing cancer; so as facilities have been reconfigured, remodeled, or rebuilt, they have been moving away from putting the turnouts in the apparatus room, instead locating them elsewhere. This is the reason for the additional room, to move that equipment away from the apparatus room. Chief Lindner

went on to explain that they currently have two apparatus bays and three pieces of equipment needing to be housed. The third piece has been housed in an open carport. The Department of Homeland Security's recommendation is that all facilities in public safety are to be in locked locations. The open carport does not work for this, other than locking the vehicle doors.

Chief Lindner addressed the parking issue, which has been discussed extensively with the architectural team. Additional parking is needed. There are many variables involved. The parking does not allow for visiting apparatus to go through the parking lot easily. When all units are in the station, there is no way for visiting apparatus to go around; instead, they would have to back into the location from Portola Road.

The minimum staffing for the station is three people – one captain, at least one paramedic and a driver. There have been as many as four or five people there. Shifts are 48 hours long, with 96 hours off. There are three platoons and three shifts. This results in two days on, and four days off for the firefighters. Their shifts are 8:00 a.m. to the following 8:00 a.m., with two shifts consecutively, totaling 48 hours. During shift change, personnel will come and go at different timeframes, usually starting at 7:00 a.m., with the prior shift starting to vacate at 8:00 a.m. There is also a cadet and volunteer program through the College of San Mateo. Currently, there are nine cadets from the program, three per shift, so there can be up to all three in the district on a given day. They can be at one of three stations, and they try not to put multiple cadets at one station, except for the Woodside station.

The chipper program has been ongoing for a number of years and is increasing in size and value, not only in meeting the needs and benefits to the district, but as far as logistics, Station 8 is used as a coverage area for personnel, for equipment, for parking and/or personnel to be able to go through the station. When the program was started, it was with current firefighter personnel who would work on their days off, but it has grown so substantially to the point that it is now its own entity within the Fire Prevention Division, run specifically for areas of the District, from May through October. However, with the growing needs of both the District and the Town in vegetation management, the chipper program is being utilized year round. There are three chippers, plus the vehicles in which to throw the wood chips and support trucks or vehicles to either tow the chippers or tow a porta potty for the crews on the team. Staffing has increased to six individuals currently. If the team is in Portola Valley for an extended amount of time, they could park their vehicles in Portola Valley while working within the town.

Chief Lindner explained that Station 8 currently houses Engine 8 and Water Tender 108, the two primary pieces of equipment. Engine 508, which is a smaller four wheel drive off-road patrol/brush vehicle, is currently kept at Station 7 for parking purposes, and will be moved back to Station 8 after the remodeling is completed. Various other pieces of equipment stored at Station 8 include a communications trailer which is staffed by public officials of Portola Valley, two of which are on the Emergency Preparedness Committee. In summary, there can be a number of different vehicles housed at the fire station at any given time.

Regarding accommodations and needed upgrades, Chief Lindner noted that daily duties have increased over the years, as well as running 911 calls, both emergency and nonemergency calls. People may come into the station with a medical emergency, and daily station business includes captains prepping for inspections, didactic training on computers, either in the station, on location, or outside within the District. Station 8 is used for training purposes onsite, which is one of the reasons for moving parking from the back. Regarding recommendations put forth to locate parking on the commercial side, he said this is where they do the overwhelming majority of training, and it would be a significant hindrance to start adding vehicles to an area where

they're hooking up hoses to fire engines or fire hydrants and trying to extend those. The possibility for damage would increase significantly, so as much as it seems like it would be a good idea, it's not in the best interests for safety purposes to do that.

Chief Lindner shared that the fire station is home to the staff, including cooking, dining, cleaning, maintenance, and sleeping. In summary, the proposal for the remodel is for additions to increase the number of beds, increase office space, have more dedicated offices, move the turn-outs off the apparatus walls to its own structure, adding a third apparatus bay, add additional parking spaces, add a drive-through for visiting apparatus to the front, improve training facilities both inside and outside, and generally remodeling the roofing, kitchen, painting, floor finishes, et cetera.

Carter Warr went over the parking issue in greater detail. The current parking is inadequate for existing conditions. There is enough for seven staff and one ADA space. A lot of other equipment is being parked in landscape areas amongst the trees. The required parking on a daily basis is for eight staff, one ADA space, two visitors and four pieces of equipment. The proposal is for 18 spaces, which is only three spaces more than the bare minimum needed. The attempt was to look forward to what is necessary versus what the site could contain. An enormous number of different opportunities in different places were studied. The Town Ordinance does not define the required spaces area. Comparisons to retail, medical/dental and banks facilities show, in all cases, the floor area required would be between 25 and 29 spaces for a building of comparable size.

Mr. Wasserman commented that there has been extensive neighbor outreach and meetings with neighbors, resulting in removing the Sheriff's Office from the plan, relocating the proposed drive-through lane to the front of the property, re-locating the additional property parking spots to the front of the property, removal of the exterior lighting from the new apparatus bay back wall, reducing the number and size of windows in the new bay, and maintaining existing landscape buffers from the neighbors' properties. The District has been agreeable to what the neighbors wanted regarding landscape around their properties, and has tried to accommodate their preferences to the best of their ability.

Mr. Wasserman summarized/recapped the parking discussions. They originally planned the parking and circulation to be located on the back of the property, anticipating Conservation Committee's preference. Neighbor concerns as well as and input from the ASCC led them to revise and locate parking and circulation to the front of the site. They received favorable review comments from the Planning Commission on this revision; however, the Conservation Committee's preference is for the original proposed design. Mr. Wasserman indicated that there is an anonymous philanthropist paying for majority of the cost, but the longer the process drags out, the more at risk they are of losing the funding. He extended a plea to move forward and get the project out of planning, where it has been for a long time.

Chair Ross invited questions of the applicant team.

Commissioner Sill asked if the living quarters modifications are going to require temporary quarters, such as a trailer. Mr. Wasserman said he does not anticipate the need for any interim housing, and said they will use creative solutions for accommodations in the interim.

Commissioner Cheung wondered about the extent to which this is meant to meet current needs versus future projected needs, given the renovation cycle of the station historically. Is there accepted practice for projecting needs for a fire station? And where does this proposal sit in

terms of how long it will satisfy the needs of the Department? Mr. Wasserman indicated the proposed additions are not to accommodate future growth, but to accommodate what has organically happened over the years to the station. In terms of planning for future growth, that is not really the case. The completed station will be the right size for the area in which it serves, assuming no large developments or something that significantly changes the demographics of the area. The Department is trying to catch up current conditions for a proper, safe facility for the town's fire fighters.

Mr. Warr added that he was involved in the station remodel the last time. The start of the design was in 1993 and completion of the remodel was in 1995. This was 26 years ago. It's anticipated that a remodel and reconsideration of the facility is going to center mostly around staffing and emergency service response. Population of the Woodside Fire Protection District is mostly stable; however, fire protection needs to continue to grow in response to climate and vegetation management. As a resident himself, he hopes for the open space districts and each town and county to work in concert with the District on increasing fire suppression so that more manpower isn't necessary. They anticipate this to be a long-term plan. Chief Lindner added if there was room for additional personnel or equipment, there would be no additional need for an entire additional engine company or to double the current size. However, there is potential need to staff second or third vehicle, which generally is two people. Given those numbers, the total of five bedrooms would fill that need when the situation requires an increase in staffing of emergency response vehicles and personnel.

Commissioner Koch referenced the fence line in back being moved and asked if it is understood that the maintenance of the vegetation in the landscape area next to it, which had been managed by the adjacent homeowner, would be managed by the fire station. Mr. Wasserman acknowledged that is correct.

Hearing no further comments from the Commission, Chair Ross invited comments and questions from the public.

Bob Turcott commented that he supported the proposal and the need to support the Fire District, and he sees this as a modest proposal. He seconded the need to consider whether this is enough of an extension. Even if the population of Portola Valley stays stable, the population has changed in the last ten years, and he thinks that certainly the next ten years will be worse. Additionally, the anticipation is not for the population to be stable. The RHNA allocation for the next cycle is expected to be 253 units, and the Town is working hard to accommodate that, which would be a ten-percent increase. Mr. Turcott said he defers to the experts, but urges them to ensure the needs going forward are addressed and satisfied, because certainly the town is going to grow. Secondly, regarding the proposal to allow public buildings in RN1 zones, he is a little unclear why that is the approach, as opposed to changing the zone of the current property to administrative professional, which would be consistent with the immediate neighborhood. He pointed out that right across the street there is AP zoning, and the principle use of those zones includes public buildings, so it seems like that would be the better way to go. If, in fact, the Town prefers adding public buildings to RN1 zones, then instead of just notifying a handful of residents within 1,000 feet of the fire station, notification should really be sent to all 337 residents that occupy RN1 zones, or possibly even the entire town, as this is a substantial change.

Jan Mountjoy said the meeting has been pleasant to listen to, and it looks like the neighbors are going to be very happy with the parking remaining in front of the building. It had been, from her point of view, a disaster to have parking shifted to the rear of the building. She is a very happy

neighbor at the moment. She commented that there hasn't been any particular detail associated with the landscape at the interface between the fire station and her house. She is hoping to have some discussion with the fire department regarding more specific landscape plans for that area, as well as irrigation. She wondered if that would be taken care of through personal communication.

Caroline Vertongen was very supportive of the applicant's proposal to update the fire station. She commented that she was pleased that the Sheriff's Office was no longer part of the plan, but she would like a confirmation that the zoning change is for the fire station only. She also had a question about the chipper program, which she thinks is a wonderful program, but she hopes the emphasis of the Fire Department is still training on preventing fires. She is sure there are other places to store the chipper trucks, especially if there is already collaboration with the College of San Mateo, who has plenty of parking area, and she thinks there are plenty of places in the town that would rent or lease parking space. She feels the main objective of updating the fire station is to make sure there are appropriately-trained fire fighters who will also prevent fires. She hopes that prevention is the primary goal. She asked if a particular grant that was applied for had been received, and she wondered when the update on the fire station would take place, because there are several things going on in Portola Valley, and it is on one of the two main roads which already have issues with traffic. She would like assurance that it is properly coordinated so as not to add to existing fire safety hazards.

Chair Ross said the zoning issue will likely be before the Planning Commission and is not relevant to ASCC review or recommendations. He asked Planning and Building Director Russell to comment if she had information regarding the referenced grant. Director Russell deferred to the applicant, stating she is not aware of a grant. Chair Ross said his impression is that the project is imminent, has funding, and if approved and a building permit is issued, the project will go forward. Mr. Warr said this was correct. Chief Lindner added Ms. Vertongen could have been referring to the applicant from several years ago for which the proposal was potentially grant-based, which did not happen. He remarked that financing has been secured for the Station 7 rebuild and the Station 8 remodel, and that work may start once the permits are pulled.

Bob Schultz commented that they have been neighbors of Station 8 for ten years and consider them good neighbors. Having worked with staff and the Department for two years, they are happy and feel the design team came up with innovative solutions for the parking issue, which they appreciate. He pointed out that the scale and potential impact of the project is huge. There are a lot of things being packed onto a one-acre lot, but he also understands that all the parties involved have a shared goal, which is a stronger fire department. Mr. Schultz said they are asking to do what can be done to minimize the impact to neighbors and acknowledged that a lot has been done. He said they are asking the ASCC to allow that to happen. Regarding landscaping, he said their home looks out on the new apparatus bay and where the driveway will be, and there will be many trees removed. He has detailed a few requests in their letter. They are open and would like to work with the Department's landscape architect to optimize the landscaping and help start the ball rolling. He thanked the Town and the Fire Station for working collaboratively on the project.

Teresa Coleman said she would appreciate consideration of the impact from what is being proposed on the Scenic Corridor with respect to the view from Portola Road. As she understands the plan, there is a very narrow front planting strip immediately adjacent to the currently-existing area along the front fence. She doesn't believe it's any wider than five feet. Anyone driving down Portola Road is going to see a parking lot instead of beautiful trees. The plans as they currently exist do not include addressing preservation of the thriving native

plantings that are in front of the fire station. She said the summary states that there will be some sort of rainwater catchment system, and she was unable to see anywhere how or where that would be occurring, which would have a great impact on what could be planted where. Planning and Building Director Russell indicated that the applicant can probably describe the width of the planning area in the front, next to the roses, and they would also be able to describe where the catchment system is. Chair Ross deferred the question until the applicant's presentation.

Judith Murphy said she enthusiastically supports the upgrade and expansion of the building, stating that it is fabulous and overdue. She thought Mr. Warr did a great job with the planning of it through all its iterations. She said in the Conservation Committee's report from April 2021, she remarked that there was no mention in the staff report of the Scenic Corridor which seemed like an oversight. She understands that the building doesn't cause a problem or issue with the Corridor; however, looking at parking and driveways along almost the entire frontage of the lot is not in the spirit of the Corridor. Regarding the drive-through, Ms. Murphy said the Committee previously indicated they did not want to see it in the back, but this certainly did not mean that they preferred to have it in the front. She said that there were multiple discussions with neighbors, but not multiple discussions with the Conservation Committee to clarify their understanding of what was going on with it. The drive-through seemed to Conservation, to be rather optional, and the parking spaces requested were fewer in number with each iteration. Now the parking spaces have gone up, so that's been of concern to them.

Ms. Murphy went on to say, from the Conservation Committee's perspective, the main thing is, looking at the plans now, there is a lovely, wooded parkland in the back of the lot which benefits two or three neighbors. In exchange for keeping this area, the entire frontage along Portola Road of a native plant garden and a giant redwood tree will be eliminated. So, while the neighbors are allowed to retain the little parkland, the entire rest of the town and the Scenic Corridor will see a parking lot. Ms. Murphy's perspective was that the proportionality of that did not seem right. She remarked that none of the elevations depict this view from Portola Road accurately, with cars in all the parking spaces, and there is basically what's under the fence that could be vegetated with a ground cover. She said that, along with the business next door, the public will essentially be looking directly at a bunch of vehicles sitting along Portola Road. Planning and Building Director Russell clarified that the Conservation Committee's comments are in the packet, in attachment number ten, red page 351.

Betsy Morgenthaler acknowledged the important issues being weighed and agreed with the two prior speakers. She also values the Portola Road Scenic Corridor, which is a town asset which all benefit from and take pride in. She hopes this holds weight in the Commission's decision. She asked if the Town Council is seeking the zoning code text amendment, or if the applicant is seeking the amendment. Planning and Building Director Russell answered that it is the applicant seeking the amendment. Ms. Morgenthaler said Mr. Warr proposed at the Planning Commission meeting looking at the possibility of rezoning as commercial since it's a neighboring parcel to commercial. She wondered if that is being considered. Chair Ross replied that the Planning Commission will be considering that question and those possibilities. Mr. Warr commented that they have been working with staff, asking what they recommended as the mechanism to respond to the issues most effectively, those issues being that the floor area is in excess of the RN1 zoning districts limitation, and the impervious surface is already beyond the RN1 zoning district limitations. He said that they concurred with the staff recommendation that this was the mechanism of best resort.

Jan Mountjoy was allowed to make another comment. She wanted to weigh in with remarks and a

rebuttal in response to comments about the Scenic Corridor and returning parking to the rear. She feels while people say it would be so nice for the town to have a beautiful scenic corridor, she thinks most people are just driving by and barely noticing. In addition, there will be landscaping to compensate greatly for not having parking in the rear. She emphasized it's a personal issue for her, because having the parking in the rear would destroy the value of her property, both aesthetically and financially and may reduce her opportunity to sell her property in the future. She explained that she lives on a flag lot with only 20 feet in front of her house and only 20 feet in back. The area off the side of her house is her back yard, and it would be right next to where the previous proposal for parking would be, and would destroy her privacy and add nuisances such as doors slamming, car fumes, cell phone conversations, dogs left behind in the cars and complete absence of landscaping to buffer the view. Therefore, she is very much opposed to parking in the rear.

Bob Schultz was permitted to speak again, and wanted to say that he echoed Ms. Mountjoy's thoughts. They would be moving parking in the rear, and pushing more vehicular traffic back to the corner of a residential area doesn't make sense. Those residents would have to deal with it 24/7, not just a quick drive-by on Portola Road. He is very concerned about parking on the side and rear. He pointed out also that that area of the lot is already known to have drainage issues, so adding more parking would only exacerbate problems there.

With no other public comments, Chair Ross closed oral communications and brought the item to the Commissioners for discussion.

Commissioner Cheung said his recommendations might be limited because he wasn't part of the entire cycle. He will defer to fellow Commissioners on proposing any additional requirements on the project. On the whole, he supports the project and is supportive of approving it today. The problems that are apparently the most difficult seem to be outside the purview of the ASCC and arise from the issue of zoning. Commissioner Cheung said, in that respect, to the extent it can be assumed that a fire station stays in this location, the town may have to accept the notion that there are some things that violate the text of the visual Corridor rules – barns, for a recent example – that may be able to be implemented in a way that is okay as an exception. He said that to be aware that there's a fire station there doesn't seem out of the question to him. Although passersby can't easily tell right now that there's a fire station there, this upgrade has the potential to change that, which obviously does change the visual corridor. So, as an exception for this kind of use, it seems to be a situation where it has to be taken as an individual unique case and needs to be worked through in the way that it has been, including communications with the neighbors. While he hasn't been as much a part of the process, he appreciates seeing the process worked through. It seems to him to be a suitable outcome, given the constraints of the situation.

Commissioner Sill said from the previous meeting there were four or five things that were hot buttons for him – the parking location at the rear, the number of spaces, the location of the trash enclosures, the impervious area, and the back, gated driveway. He thinks the design team has done a great job addressing all of those, with the possible exception of the number of parking spaces. He congratulated the team for coming up with creative solutions to some difficult problems. Overall, he has a positive view of what's been presented and thinks, while the impervious numbers are very high, they are appropriate for the use planned at the site. He thinks the inclusion of the impervious pavers is a good approach and is pleased with the current impervious total. He agreed with Commissioner Cheung in that the structure and parking are, in fact, going to be more visible, but there is no perfect solution. He thinks what has been proposed is the best solution to be found. He doesn't feel it will be horrible, but does hate to see

a wonderful redwood tree and native plant garden go, but thinks it is the right choice in this case.

Commissioner Sill continued, stating the materials and design are appropriate and acceptable for the use. In an ideal world, he would like to see the parking proposal be down to 15 spaces and to find a way to save the redwood tree in the front. If there was any way the design team could find a way to do that it would be great, but the argument that 18 spaces are needed is reasonably compelling, and he would not insist upon it. He feels the proposal as crafted is reasonable. He stated he doesn't feel the landscape plan is completely fleshed out, referencing comments by a couple of the neighbors. He said the Conservation report from April is excellent, but has not been fully incorporated. He noted that he is not necessarily in agreement about moving the parking, but does agree with everything else regarding which plants to choose and trees to remove and to keep. He feels there's an opportunity to take one more pass through the landscaping plan to accommodate those. He favored recommending approval on the condition that one or two ASCC members look at updating the landscape plan before the project is completed.

Commissioner Koch appreciated the concerns of the neighbors, acknowledging this is their full-time residence, and that is something that needs to be considered, perhaps trumping a Scenic Corridor passerby experience. She therefore appreciates that the drive-through and parking had been moved; also the removal of the back lighting fixtures; eliminating one garage bay; and the porthole style window proposal. She suggested thinking of the intersection between Portola Road and Alpine Road as a commercial use and stressed the importance of a fire station in the community. She thinks the proposal fits the neighborhood. If the fire station were proposed somewhere else on Portola Road or Alpine Road, the discussion could be about screening it more from the Scenic Corridor, but for where it is, she thinks they've done a good job of proposing a nice site.

Commissioner Koch also made the point that this is a possible opportunity, by way of the landscaping that will go in along the Corridor in front of the parking, an opportunity for the Fire Department to demonstrate how not to overplant, but how to plant for a defensible space, since that is an important concern right now. She said the current recommendation is to not have massive trees and plantings close to a structure, or even to cars going by, so perhaps this is an opportunity for the Fire Department to create some kind of fire safe planting as an example. She pointed out something Commissioner Cheung had mentioned in the chat; that is, the materials proposed for the structure are materials that possibly will no longer be recommended in the near future for people to use on their homes, wood siding for example. She did not recommend going back to the drawing board at this point, but was glad Commissioner Cheung brought the issue up. She thinks it is a tricky project, but said we need our fire station and to support those who are looking out for our safety and environment. She is glad there will be a chipper onsite, so they can get out first thing in the morning and do all the work that's necessary to protect the community. She supports the project with a new, more detailed landscape plan, possibly including the water catchment system, and wants to see the plan come back to the ASCC, but generally does not see any reason to hold up the proposal. Overall, she thinks they have done a good job.

Vice Chair Wilson was also appreciative of the fact that the fire station and architects have looked to all the neighbors concerned and have removed the noncompliant lights. She approves of the solid doors, louvered doors, porthole windows, and the good color board. She also approves of the parking spaces located at the front. She was trying to think about how many public properties there are without parking at the front, and she couldn't think of any. The

Library, Portola Valley Schools, Alpine Swim and Tennis Club, the hardware store, the supermarket, all of these have the parking at the front. She also looked at the redwood guidelines from the Conservation Committee on the Town website, which doesn't recommend stand-alone trees and recommends that they be planted far enough away from existing or proposed structure that their roots systems don't damage the buildings. Losing the redwood tree so that the neighbors can have peaceful enjoyment of their properties, she feels is the best way to go. Regarding the Planning Commission CUP, she said will leave that to them, but she agrees with Commissioner Sill that if there could be 15 parking spaces rather than 18, great. However, she said whatever the fire department needs, the fire department should have.

Chair Ross addressed the Scenic Corridor issue, and said he is troubled about moving more parking right on the edge of the Scenic Corridor. But this is offset by a comment that all have made, "Better here than anywhere else." If the Fire Station were being considered near Town Center or farther northwest along Portola Road or anywhere in between, he would have a serious problem with the parking in front. As it is, on the opposite side of the street – still in the Scenic Corridor – exists a whole bunch of parking in front of some commercial buildings. Right before Alpine Road on the same side as the fire station, he said, there is the treasured resource, Ramies Gas Station and Auto Repair Shop. He said it is one of the ugliest features of the Scenic Corridor, with many vehicles parked out on the street and more crowded parking on the site, but by the same token, it doesn't obstruct anybody's view of the hills.

Chair Ross offered the perspective that one of the main goals of the Scenic Corridor is to preserve that view where it exists, such as near the Windy Hill parking lot, with its beautiful vista up to the hills and the meadows in between. That view doesn't exist at this intersection. He does think there are some ways to mitigate the proposal. One would be to swap the planting area so the parking is closer to the road, with a larger buffering space between the road and the parking. A little more substantial planting might be able to be accommodated there. The applicant might also pursue the possibility of leasing a few parking spaces across the street, which he has never seen anywhere near capacity, for use as overflow, occasional-use parking, shift overlap or visitors, perhaps making it possible to reduce the parking area in front of the station by three spaces. He feels strongly that the landscape plan needs to be detailed somewhat, along with an elevation view or perspective view from Portola Road of the proposal. He would like to see the landscape plan reviewed by two ASCC members, but not coming back to the full Commission.

Chair Ross agreed with Commissioner Sill that he didn't have many issues with the buildings the first time around, and the changes that have been made are an improvement on that, such as removal of the windows and sconces on the southwest side of the building, taking the glass panels out of the roll-up doors on the northwest-facing side of the building, and allowing the space between Ramie's and the fire station to remain as the more active area. He agrees that taking all of those things into consideration really removes that area as a viable parking solution. The tradeoffs are difficult. There is an intense impact on adjacent neighbors and also a lesser impact on a larger number of people, but in terms of the value of the existing Scenic Corridor at that location, he doesn't think it's a terrible compromise to put parking in front of the building, with the addition of better screening and arrangement of plants that would soften the impact. Generally, he is in favor of the proposal as it stands, with the landscape plan to come back as mentioned.

Vice Chair Wilson commented regarding to the shift change time for the firefighters, with 8:00 a.m. being the school run time. She was concerned that firefighters parking on the other side of the street may create a traffic hazard during this busy time for school run time. Chair Ross said his sense is that he is talking about potentially only three parking spaces with relatively

infrequent use, and it wouldn't be a huge impact, although he understands the concern about the high level of activity as he lives very close to the intersection.

Commissioner Sill moved to recommend approval of the proposal and forward it on to the Planning Commission with the condition that two members of the ASCC review the landscaping plan and solicit comments from neighbors before the building permit is issued. Seconded by Commissioner Koch; the motion carried, 5-0.

COMMISSION, STAFF, COMMITTEE REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Commission Reports

Chair Ross and Vice Chair Wilson, along with Jake Garcia, contract planner and Planning and Building Director Russell, reviewed the revisions to the landscape plan for 200 Goya to address the Commission's concerns regarding the landscape plan. They subsequently asked the Conservation Committee to weigh in on their questions, and the Committee gave good recommendations and comments. In summary, they felt better about the revisions to the landscape plan after a thorough investigation, including at least one site visit from multiple Commissioners. The Committee made recommendations, including planting changes and arrangement and thinning of plants bordering property lines. Vice Chair Wilson and Chair Ross were in agreement that the project should move forward with incorporation of the Conservation Committee's comments and changes.

Staff Report

Planning and Building Director Russell said they're finalizing the next agenda and expects it to include two items: 370 Golden Oak and 107 Degas. The following meeting will probably include 77 Palmer – the two new houses next to each other. That next meeting will also include an important update regarding the Housing Element Update process. Director Russell encouraged the Commission to look at the Council staff report and watch the Zoom meeting from April 28th. The presentation starts at approximately 1 hour, 25 minutes into the Zoom recording and includes a detailed presentation on the proposed approach for the Housing Element Update and formation of an Ad Hoc committee, which the Town Council is moving forward with. Director Russell stressed that it will be a significant undertaking for the community. The Ad Hoc will include two members of the Town Council, two members of the Planning Commission, and a member of the ASCC. Director Russell will be sharing more information going forward. The Council formed a Subcommittee including Councilmember Wernikoff and Councilmember Aalfs to serve as the guiding Subcommittee for the process. Director Russell will send the ASCC a link to the presentation.

Chair Ross invited public comment on the staff report, and hearing none, closed the item.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

(5) ASCC Meeting of April 26, 2021

Chair Ross invited members of the public to comment on the minute of the previous meeting. Hearing none, he closed public comments and entertained comments from the Commissioners.

Commissioner Sill moved to approve the April 26, 2021, minutes as submitted. Seconded by Commissioner Koch, the motion passed 4-0-1 with Vice Chair Wilson abstaining.

Vice Chair Wilson expressed gratitude for Planning and Building Director Russell and staff's work. Director Russell, in turn, expressed her appreciation for the ASCC's leadership and decision-making in helping make challenging decisions as discussed in the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT [5:57 *p.m.*]