

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:

Town Council Liaison: Vice Mayor Hughes

Town Staff: Planning & Building Director Laura Russell; Consultant Planner Jake Garcia; Consultant Planner Suzanne Avila

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

NEW BUSINESS

- (1) **Architectural Review for a Site Development Permit (SDP), Landscape Improvements, Addition and Remodel, 370 Golden Oak Drive, Schtiegman, File #PLN ARCH0017-2020 (J. Garcia)**

Consulting Planner Jake Garcia shared the site background, surrounding zoning and proposed plans for an addition/remodel of the main residence and landscaping, as detailed in the staff report. New landscaping is proposed primarily at the front and rear of the residence, as well as alterations to the driveway and front and back patios. Impervious surface is proposed to dramatically decrease on the site. There are no significant trees proposed for removal. The site development permit to be reviewed by the ASCC is required for the combination of cut and fill between 100 and 1,000 cubic yards associated with the project. The project would meet all zoning requirements and setback requirements. The applicant is also proposing a 987-square-foot ADU as show in the staff report. This will be reviewed by staff through a ministerial process after the main house addition is reviewed by the ASCC.

The floor plan of the addition/remodel was presented. Elevations were presented. Two new skylights are proposed. Colors and materials were presented and are consistent with Town Guidelines. The existing site conditions were illustrated, pointing out the current driveway. The proposed new driveway design will significantly decrease impervious surface. New front and rear decks were pointed out. Proposed new landscaping includes 18,722 square feet of primarily native plantings. Water usage will be at 60 percent of the maximum allowed use. Grading was discussed, requiring 516 CY of soil movement, which requires ASCC review. Regarding proposed exterior lighting, staff requested reduction of lighting at the auto court and that the applicant change all driveway lighting and auto court lighting to reflectors to better meet the Design Guidelines, which discourages driveway lighting. Staff also recommended reduction of lighting around the perimeter of the building. The applicant has removed some of the proposed exterior recessed lighting and wall lighting. Other proposed lighting includes step lights at both the front and rear decks, path lighting throughout the site, and the hanging light at the trellis area. Public notice has been mailed per requirements, and to date, no comments have been received.

Chair Ross invited questions from the Commissioners. Hearing none, he invited the applicant to make presentation.

Ethan Taylor, project manager for Klop Architecture, presented factors relevant to the ASCC that influenced the design decisions. He explained the considerations regarding the site location and visibility of the addition areas, as well as maintaining the building style and aesthetic of the existing house. The ADU and addition areas were located towards the back/north end of the site, essentially against the rear property line, to minimize the impact of the addition areas on street passersby and neighbors.

Mr. Taylor detailed the building style and aesthetic. Much of the existing structure has been maintained, carrying forward the post and beam, ranch house style to the addition areas, with very subtle transition between structures. Existing building height was considered as well, with the ridge height for the addition areas planned to be below the existing ridge height to help blend the new areas in with the existing house and minimize their visual prominence. Mr. Taylor conveyed consideration for the Guidelines in the choice of materials as well as lighting. Regarding the hardscape and landscaping, they worked on bringing the visual effect of the height of the structure down by integrating it with the hillside. Currently there is a fair amount of inaccessible hillside, so the proposal includes terraced decks and steps to minimize this appearance and to make this area of the site more accessible and useable.

Joseph Huettl, Landscape Architect, added that the front terrace was an opportunity to take advantage of views and provide outdoor living space. In addition to removal of the driveway section as noted, the irrigated lawn area will be replaced by a meadow requiring less water use. The terraced section will eliminate railings, lending a more open feel to the space. In the back yard, a grouping of native oaks near the pool will be preserved. The new paving is slightly further away from this grouping. The backyard maintains a lawn in a similar location to the existing lawn, and the back hillside is landscaped with natives and Mediterranean plants. The perimeter establishes and maintains screening, mostly of native shrubs, for which flammability was also considered.

Eran Schtiegman, applicant, introduced himself and shared about himself and his family. He stated it was important to them to remodel the house in a way that fits into the overall feeling in Portola Valley as well as to choose a lead architect and a landscape architect to guide them in this pursuit.

Chair Ross invited questions from the Commissioners.

Commissioner Koch asked for a bit more detail on the garage doors as it appears in some of the elevations that they may be glass. Mr. Taylor replied that they are planned to be dark bronze, anodized aluminum frame, with frosted glass panels in between, with the idea of matching all the railings and guards, as well as the garage door at the front of the house, in a cohesive look with everything in frosted glass on the front.

Commissioner Sill asked what is happening with the existing fencing and the plans for new fencing. Mr. Schtiegman answered that it will be staying the same. Mr. Huettl added they are relying on the shrubs to create a green wall around the property. The existing iron fence will be replaced and moved slightly, proposed to be composed of vertical bars without any attaching top rail to provide a lighter, airy effect, in either Corten steel or a dark gray to match railings on the house.

Chair Ross appreciated the thorough presentation and very complete application. He invited comments from the public. Hearing none, he invited discussion among the Commissioners.

Commissioner Sill expressed his positive reaction to the proposal, remarking that they've taken an already cleverly-designed house and created an outstanding proposal. He thought the materials are very attractive. Given current conditions in the Town, he expressed some concern at the proposal for wood siding in terms of fire danger, potential new ordinances, and from an insurance point of view. He suggested the possibility of some small holes in the perimeter fence to allow small animal passage, as opposed to completely enclosing the property in chain link fence. He thought the lighting is perhaps a bit too much, but basically okay with him. He thought the landscaping proposal is good, although he would like to see a little less lawn. Overall, he thought it is a great proposal, and he agrees with the staff's findings. He was pleased about the reduction in impervious area; the fitting of the design with the existing house; the siting to minimize the impact. He likes the new meadow, and that there is no tree removal planned. He concluded that there are lots of positives with the proposal, a few little things he's not thrilled with, but overall, he is ready to back the proposal as outlined.

Commissioner Cheung agreed with Commissioner Sill's comments. The decreased impervious surface area is an obvious improvement. Generally, the property has been moved in the direction of the Design Guidelines' intent, which is nice to see. He also mentioned concern regarding flammable siding, and mentioned that there are less-flammable materials that can provide the same look, especially when painted. On the whole, he is supportive of the project with the possible exception of the siding. He shared that one of the things he appreciates about Portola Valley is the way the wildlife flows through properties, and he also suggested perhaps not putting in a fence that will block wildlife. Mr. Schteigman clarified that there is no fence on the front of the property and that a large area remains unfenced. Their main motivation for the fence is simply to protect their dog. Commissioner Cheung said he could appreciate this and concluded stating that the effort to minimize the visual impact on neighbors is appreciated and nice to see.

Vice Chair Wilson agreed with Commissioners Sill and Cheung. She was glad to hear that the property was not completely fenced, as the Commission does like to encourage animal corridors. She re-emphasized thinking carefully about the siding, since it may significantly affect insurance costs. She was happy about the recommendations from the Conservation Committee and their suggestions for removal of various species. She asked that they follow through with their recommendations about invasive weeds, as they are trying to reduce the invasives as much as possible so that the natives can come back. She suggested adopting the Conservation Committee's "less is more" philosophy in regard to plantings. Otherwise, she said she likes the proposal and is happy to support it.

Commissioner Koch said it is a beautiful project in a wonderful neighborhood. She said she is glad they have settled here and thinks they will enjoy it. She said lowering the impervious surface is a huge improvement on this property, bringing the land back to their home and making it that much more enjoyable. She made some recommendations about skylights. First, making sure they are not lit other than ambient light from the room to preserve the night sky. This also applies to the garage doors. Any light from within should be blocked from view of anyone outside. She said she was glad for the talk about materials, although she understands the desire to match the existing siding. She warned that their material choice is no longer going to be allowed in Portola Valley, and insurance companies will recognize that as well. Her preference would be to see a couple lighting fixtures removed, but she doesn't feel it is overly excessive. She thinks the project is gorgeous and is very happy to see improvement to the site.

Chair Ross added a couple comments. Regarding the exterior lighting, it could be thinned out a bit more. When installed, they may find that the property is very well-lit, probably more than the average lot in town. He suggested having different circuits for different areas of the path lighting, although he would not make this a condition of approval. He suggested different zones of lighting for different functions, such as family gatherings or larger gatherings of guests. Having the path lights on different circuits based on the use of the areas would help ensure that they are not all on at once. He said they might also consider some sort of an indicator inside the house to alert them to outside lights that are on, or perhaps a timer to turn them off late at night; all of this in the interest of preserving the night sky as much as possible.

Regarding the glass garage doors, he is glad to see that discouraging this trend has gotten traction with the ASCC, relating that with glass doors any lights inside are visible from surrounding houses. He went on to say that, although he personally loves cedar siding, he agreed with the other commissioners that with all the fire hardening efforts in town, local building codes will not be allowing natural wood siding on houses probably within the next two to three years. He said that if the applicant wanted to present an alternate material for the new areas, it would not require a full ASCC review, but probably something at the staff level or one ASCC member taking a look at it would suffice. He agreed with Vice Chair Wilson's statement regarding landscape – that less is more. While it is tempting to install a huge landscape initially, it will grow up to be a jungle of sorts. He said in the interest of both fire safety as well as keeping surrounding vistas open, he would be cautious about over-planting. He agrees with all the positive comments regarding the project; it respects the site well and the sight lines of neighbors well. It respects the Town Design Guidelines very well. He applauded all for their excellent work.

Commissioner Koch moved to approve the project with the conditions proposed by Planning staff and with consideration to a few of the suggestions offered. Seconded by Commissioner Cheung and Vice Chair Wilson; the motion carried, 4-0.

(1) **Architectural Review of an Application for an Addition and Remodel to an Existing Residence, 107 Degas Road, Bailis, File #PLN ARCH04-2021 (S. Avila)**

Suzanne Avila, Consulting Planner, presented the proposal for preliminary review, which is for a new residence, pool and landscape improvements. The proposal involves removal of all existing site improvements. She gave a description of the property and surrounding vicinity. The 2.51-acre, heavily-wooded property gently slopes downward from Westridge Drive. The driveway will come off of Degas. The overall site proposal is to leave most of the property that is below the house in a natural state. Some non-native trees have been removed, and the owners/applicants are working with their arborist to remove invasives and add more native plantings. The floor area was presented. The plan is well under the maximum for impervious surface area. The elevations were presented. The south, rear-facing elevation is the only elevation that is a full two stories. The view from Westridge Drive will be filtered by trees, and the house will sit well back from the road. The applicant is using all fire-safe materials on the exterior, including a metal roof and non-combustible siding. Sections were presented showing the portions of the house which are set down into the property.

The landscape plan was presented. Much is focused along the Degas frontage which is where most of the trees were removed. They will restore the grassy meadow area below the house. Approximately 85 percent of the proposed planting is native species. The exterior lighting plan shows low-level or downward-directed fixtures, including low-level path lights, and the ones along the driveway are primarily in-ground lights. There are three pool lights, including step lights. The proposed fencing is a four-foot, wood frame, welded wire fence, navigable by deer,

and maintains an opening for wildlife to pass. There is existing fencing along the east property line and along the Westridge frontage, and some along the Degas frontage. Exterior colors and materials blend the house to the site. Grading volumes were presented, which require approval by the ASCC. Six trees which are protected are proposed to come out, one in the area of construction, another is a carrier for sudden oak death, and four which are primarily dead. The irrigated landscape area and water use were presented, with the proposal at about 77 percent of the allowance for the property. The property has 120 points for GreenPoint rating; 50 are needed for green certification through Build It Green. One letter of support has been received from neighbors.

Chair Ross invited questions for the staff.

Commissioner Koch asked if there is a trash enclosure or why there is so much lighting on the Westridge side of the structure. Ms. Avila said that some of them are low-level path lights. Also, two are on corners of a small courtyard. She said the plan makes them look close together, but the scale plan illustrates that they are quite spread out, and the path lights are set apart and staggered on either side. Some are along a wall with steps. She described the different lights, stating most are very low-level and small. Some are dark sky compliant, and there are BUG ratings for the others. She said most fixtures are fairly cool lighting, concentrated around the house and yard area and set back from Westridge and the rear property line, so unlikely to impinge on neighbors.

Ms. Tauber pointed out there are 17 different lighting zones, controlled separately, making it possible to turn on only what is needed, when and where it's needed. Lighting is concentrated at level changes such as steps or terrain that needs to be seen. All other lighting is low-level, low wattage, and low lumen output. She explained that the BUG rating is a numerical way of capturing and proving where the light goes, as opposed to dark sky which is just a recommendation with no numbers.

Commissioner Koch asked about the fencing and whether the intention is to leave the existing wood fences, or if all existing fencing was to be removed, with the proposal including only the new. Ms. Bailis replied that they are planning for the new fence only. The wood fence along Westridge is in disrepair and will be removed. The other fence is the neighbor's fence. Commissioner Koch wanted to make sure it was not a double fence situation which can be very stressful for animals. Mr. Bailis confirmed this is not their objective, but they need to accommodate the neighbor's pattern. They do not intend to disrupt any wildlife corridors.

Chair Ross asked what the deck material is. Mr. Tauber responded that the material is tile with steel framework, infill will be wood frame with a buildup, and reiterated that they are avoiding any combustible materials on the project. Chair Ross asked if the proposal will also go to the Planning Commission for approval. Ms. Avila calculated that since the cut and fill is under 1,000, it will not go to the Planning Commission.

Chair Ross invited the applicant team to present any additional comments.

Mr. Bailis said they are relocating to the Bay Area at the request of their adult children who wanted them to live closer. Part of their vision was to establish an environment for their children and grandchildren to enjoy the natural environmental of Portola Valley. Their objective for landscaping is to return it to a more natural state, and they are also very concerned about fire. They will have no combustible material on the exterior and will choose sustainable plant

material that provides a safe barrier around the home. He said they have carefully considered the materials and insurability of the property, even though this made the design more difficult.

Mr. Tauber, Architect, described how they are implementing the applicant's parameters and objective, while addressing the Town's Design Guidelines. The footprint of the building is organized parallel to the contours of the property, minimizing the height of the building, and minimizing the slope down into the house. There are a series of small retaining walls. The main strategy was to nestle the house into the hill. Regarding vegetation, they have tried to embrace the trees and make them the focus. He said only one heritage-type of tree will be removed to make this happen, as they will be mostly building around and showcasing the trees. The orientation of the home was shifted slightly to maximize views for the house, but it will remain mostly in the existing location. In terms of views from the ridge line, the home is set down from Westridge, the highest point being nine feet lower than the lowest point at Westridge, so the view from Westridge looks out over the rooftop, which is below the tree canopy. Primarily the view from Westridge is trees, sky and beyond, not the house. The building has a 50-foot setback off Degas and keeps the view corridor open for neighbors from the east.

Mr. Tauber explained that materials were selected to blend into the natural environment, but also meet Design Guideline light reflectance standards. The sheltered courtyard was created to become the anchor for the house. The plan is not a flat plane across any one side, which reduces the perceived mass and scale of the house. The roof form undulates and is anchored to the site conceptually. From the south, the façade is offset to reduce the apparent mass. Horizontal decks and trellises also mitigate the mass and produce shadow to reduce impact of mass. The entranceway access is down site, and not directly into the garage. There are no gates proposed. Landscaping is 85 percent native plantings, per Design Guidelines, with invasives removed and replaced with natives selected to reduce potential fire fuel. South of the house there is a meadow which will be planted with natural grasses.

Ms. Tauber went into more detail about the BUG rating with the lighting. She expanded on the Town's guidelines and provided a schedule of all lighting details. Some fixtures have Dark Sky compliance and also have BUG (Backlight, Uplight, Glare) ratings. The uplight value is the one primarily concerned with interrupting the night sky. Glare ratings tell which ones may cause light trespass to neighbors. The proposed fixtures have low, favorable ratings and indicate very good shielding for the lighting, which is intended to blend both with architecture and the landscape.

Chair Ross invited questions of the applicant from the Commissioners.

Commissioner Koch was very interested in the BUG rating and felt it is something the Commission should look into.

Vice Chair Wilson asked about the reason for the fencing, if not to deter deer. Mr. and Mrs. Bailis answered that their children have dogs, and the fence is intended to accommodate them. Along Westridge, the fence is in disrepair, and they will seek to replace it at some future phase when they are able to. Vice Chair Wilson affirmed their tree removal plan, but asked where they are in the tree removal process. Mr. Bailis said the arborist is still working there. There are at least two eucalyptus trees still there, and he is deferring removal of those until they move out. Also, there is a non-native, partially-dead tree near the deck in back that will be removed. The remaining plant material is much smaller, and much of it needs to come out. They are trying to address the most egregious components in phase one and will go back later to implement permanent landscaping in coordination with the Town.

Chair Ross invited questions or comments from members of the public. Hearing none, he invited discussion among the commissioners.

Vice Chair Wilson appreciated not building everything to the maximum limits, including impervious surface. She is very pleased with removal of the eucalyptus, pines, cedars and the grading plan to match the existing slope. Her only question was with the fact that there are three pool lights, and Cresta Vista, the road up the hill, does look directly down on Degas. The story poles for the proposal are in the line of sight from her residence, where residents will look directly down on the lights. She said there is, however, good shielding of light from Westridge. She feels the design is not going to affect the lights for neighbors on Cresta Vista. She said the only ones she would consider would be the pool lights being reduced. She is happy that the Conservation Committee has so far applauded the landscaping efforts. The trick may come in with the construction work, but she feels they are prepared to do the necessary work to produce a lovely property. She is happy with the way things are going with the exception of the three pool lights.

Commissioner Cheung agreed with Vice Chair Wilson's comment. As a fellow town resident, he was grateful for the plan to remove eucalyptus and other hazardous and invasive species. He appreciates the attempt to abide by not only current Town Guidelines, but also anticipate and abide by potential future recommendations, choosing all fire-safe materials, and keeping the fence low. He mentioned that Bay Laurels are being taken off the list of protected species. With regard to lighting, he concurs with previous concerns. He pointed out that the challenge with lighting design conformance with being able to see the night sky is that it is cumulative and aggregated across all the properties. In addition, lighting fixtures are not rated in conjunction with how they will be used. While it's critical to not direct the light straight upwards, it is also important to consider the reflectance of what is being lit, as this is what is really going to affect the overall effect of the property and add to the cumulative effect of all the properties. This means the general recommendation is, no matter what, to reduce the total amount of exterior lighting in general, keeping it to the minimum and designing a system to be on only when needed. Commissioner Cheung concluded that the effort to do that is appreciated. Overall, he reiterated that he likes a project that is sensitive to future design guidelines.

Commissioner Sill was highly complimentary of the proposal, stating it checks all the boxes of what he thinks about in looking at a project – fire safety, sustainable, attractive, great material choices, great siting, minimal impacts to neighbors, sensible fencing. He thought the lighting is acceptable in general, though would like to see a little less. He was curious about the light on the mailbox and hesitant about this, but otherwise sees many positives. A significant amount of property is left natural, not built to maximum limits, cleans up non-natives, uses no combustible material, has a smart plan for the driveway, and no lawn. He was initially concerned about the water use, but since almost half is going to be native meadow, once it is established much less will be needed. Overall, he said it is a spectacular proposal.

Commissioner Koch said this is a property in need of TLC and is amazed that they've been living there, but the proposal is going to be a huge improvement. She said what is seen now from Westridge or Degas has been sad and scary, looking like a fire hazard. She loves the creation of the second-story element within the downside slope, exactly what the Guidelines suggest, using the hillside to advantage. Exterior materials being firesafe is the right direction to go, and she thinks it will look beautiful. She asked that on their return they propose a final answer on what the fencing will look like. On the landscape plan, she recommended they try to remove a few lights here and there, as all of that tends to accumulate, especially in the driveway where headlights may also contribute. Some pathways may not need as much lighting unless

there might be a trash enclosure or something that would be regularly accessed at night. Otherwise, she describes it as a gorgeous property. Ms. Tauber wished to interject that the lighting controls are not really highlighted on the early landscape plans. Most of the proposal is for the exterior lighting to be primarily on motion sensors and all of them on a timer. She said none of it needs to be on unless there is use of the space in question. That was the purpose of so many separate control zones. It is off until needed, off during curfew hours, et cetera, but the lights are truly on an as-needed basis. She doubts they would ever all be on at the same time. Ms. Bailis added that safety is an important focus of the plan, avoiding falls, avoiding the drop-off of the driveway, et cetera.

Commissioner Koch added that the ASCC as a whole would not likely support a light on the mailbox, even to illuminate house numbers, as this is the profile of the street image that they promote throughout town. Reflective house numbers could be used. Other than that, she said she looks forward to seeing the plan coming back.

Chair Ross said he thinks it is an excellent project in all aspects. The plan for fire hardening is a model for the town, and he hopes it gets some attention in that respect. He likes the undulating roof form, although noting there might be some interesting water removal issues. Overall, he said it is a great project and nearly ready to bring back for approval. He brought up the lighting on the meadow path. While they may envision grandkids running along the path after dark, a less formal path as a place to enjoy the natural environment might be more fitting and a bit more respectful of the meadow environment. Since it is remote enough from the house that there might be a fair amount of wildlife, he questioned if motion-triggered path lights may be an issue. He completely agrees with the motion-sensor path lights for specific uses as mentioned, but in areas likely to attract wildlife, they may come on quite often. Ms. Tauber said they are meant to be manual after dark. Chair Ross continued that this was his only additional comment. He was glad for the enlightenment on BUG lighting and he looks forward to seeing the project come back as an action item.

Commissioner Cheung concluded the comments by suggesting that the meadow path will be a magical place for grandchildren to walk by moonlight. Or flashlight, per Chair Ross.

(2) **Appointment of ASCC Member to Ad-Hoc Committee for Housing Element Update**

Chair Ross initiated the conversation by asking if anyone was interested in this appointment. Commissioner Sill stated he is willing to serve out of a sense of responsibility, knowing that other members have many things going on, and acknowledging it is an important role, also noting he will be recused from the Stanford Wedge discussion. Commissioner Cheung said although he is willing to serve and it is an interesting responsibility, he would readily defer to Commissioner Sill. Vice Chair Wilson commented that she is still on the Stanford Wedge Committee. Chair Ross thanked Commissioner Sill for his willingness for this important undertaking. Chair Ross invited public hearing to comment on this item. Hearing none, he invited a motion.

Commissioner Koch moved to nominate Commissioner Sill to serve on the Ad Hoc Committee for the Housing Element Update. Seconded by Commissioner Cheung; the motion carried, 5-0.

Commissioner Koch had a question about the ADU discussion. Does the Town do anything to enforce these being actually used as accessory dwelling units? Planning and Building Director Russell answered that the restrictions on use of ADUs is not enforced, as there is not an appropriate legal mechanism for them to do that. In some cases affordable housing has deed

restrictions in which they have to be rented to people meeting certain qualifications, but this is extremely rare. She is not familiar with any programs that apply to ADUs, and the Town has not had serious conversations about it. Chair Ross said there are some restrictions about short term rentals in town; Planning and Building Director Russell confirmed this, stating that if ADUs are rented, it needs to be for more than 30 days. Commissioner Koch wondered about the case where someone is using it for their own personal enjoyment, to just effectively have a bigger house. Director Russell said that the Planning Commission has discussed this circumstance and that there is an understanding about it, and that this will sometimes be the case, along with the understanding that houses and ADUs are being constructed for the long-term, and household needs may change over time, and the owner will change over time, so this is the idea, of having that flexibility that is important to families.

COMMISSION, STAFF, COMMITTEE REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Commission Reports

Commissioner Koch looked at the Carano project light fixture change. She was surprised the previous light fixture had been approved, an open lantern at the gate. She said they came up with a much better option, with more shielding, which she approved.

Chair Ross reported on a discussion at a meeting of Commission chairs and staff and the mayor last Monday. He said they talked about adding language to the agenda to help guide people who are joining in from the public, as there is increased public participation. Going forward, there will probably be some kind of hybrid system for future meetings, both in-person and with some tele-presence, so people can still participate by Zoom. Town Manager Dennis is heading up an effort to organize this. Chair Ross is working with the Chair of the Planning Commission, Craig Taylor, to craft brief language for the beginning of the agenda to guide people who want to make comments, either in oral communications or on each agenda item. They have seen with increased participation that the meetings can go longer. This hasn't been as big an issue for the ASCC as for Town Council and other jurisdictions where there have been five- or six-hour meetings because of the volume of public comments. He is open to suggestion on his draft of the ASCC portion of that. He plans to keep it to two paragraphs, one being bullet points about the content of what ASCC reviews are about and the kinds of things that people might find most useful to address to the ASCC, and the format used.

Commissioner Koch said she has noticed that a lot of the public comment is a repeat of comment submitted in written prior to the meeting. She said it seems as though there is concern that it won't be recognized or part of the permanent record unless it is actually verbalized. She asked if there was a way to remind the public that written comments are heard and considered. Chair Ross said one of the bullet points is that if written comments are submitted, they can be assured that they are read and that they do become part of the public record. He also thinks there has been an increase in the number of people who seek to use the public comment as a question/answer session, which it is not intended to be. For specific agenda items the official format is for the applicant to have a certain amount of time for presentation; then public comment; then a rebuttal period for the applicant to address any issues that may have come up that they need an additional opportunity to address. Chair Ross said he will try to be more mindful of this going forward. He appreciates the more informal process that the ASCC has, where there is room for some interaction, where, if a member of the public or a commission has a question, there can be interaction with the applicant or staff about it, instead of sticking to the formal guidelines. He doesn't feel there is a problem with this as long as the due process rights of the applicant are not compromised. The public should be heard, but the applicant is the one

who has due process rights. Chair Ross welcomed thoughts about what should be included or where it should appear in the agenda. This can be emailed to Planning and Building Director Russell, and she will forward it to the entire commission.

Chair Ross invited public comment on the Commissioner Reports.

Caroline Vertongen said there has been confusion and communication problems in the past, which is the reason they must ask during Oral Communications if their emails had been received. Now that comments go to a central location, often it has not been mentioned, or Town Council is surprised that comments were based on something previously submitted. She apologized that the community is stressing the importance of their participation. She said they don't like to give negative comments, but do wish to help their new neighbors by offering their comments, saving them from going through similar hurdles that they have been through. Sometimes there are policies that were not clear from other committees. She said they also feel there is not enough communication among the committees. For instance, why aren't we consulting with the Bicycle and Traffic Committee, as sometimes there are issues to be reported involving multiple committees? She appreciates including public participation and says it is simply to make life in the community better.

Chair Ross thanked Ms. Vertongen for the comments and added that staff is continually seeking to improve the Town's processes.

Ms. Morganthaler said she had learned much today through the detailed and thorough look at both plans and the comments afforded to both parties. She said she felt drawn to want to follow the Commission's guidance. Secondly, she reflected that, given the current ADU discussions, she suggested a "carrot" approach, in that both parties mentioned the fact of a coming ADU, yet, because of the new state requirements, there is no plan as yet for Portola Valley in this regard. Her last thought was a thank you that, for the past three meetings, Director Russell has given a sneak preview about what to expect on the next ASCC agendas. She has appreciated this and hopes it will continue.

Staff Report

Planning and Building Director Russell stated the project at 107 Degas will likely be back to the ASCC quickly, given the relatively light comments from the Commission. The next meeting is on June 14th, which at this point will include 77 Palmer. They are working on the Fire Station application. The ASCC review has been forwarded to the Planning Commission, and they anticipate that will be on June 16th. She said the Town Attorney's Office is leading the Town's most recent ADU Ordinance amendments to bring them into compliance with state law. She said the Planning Commission was discussing this at their last meeting and will be talking about it again on June 2nd. A more thorough update will be coming. Even though ministerial ADUs don't come to the ASCC as a matter of state law, the Commission still has a role in a certain circumstances. She said the Council has indicated support for a staffing program that she put forward for consideration going into the budget process. They are actively recruiting for a senior planner at present, in hopes that this person would be able to start early in the new fiscal year. This is a high-priority request for staff that was not funded previously due to the pandemic. She is very hopeful the right candidate will be found. They will have a big role in the Housing Element process and potentially a role in helping oversee the ASCC as well. Director Russell anticipates continuing to have the consultant planners working with them on current projects, for as long as they are busy.

Commissioner Koch advised that if there is a meeting on July 12th, she will not be able to attend.

Chair Ross invited comments from the public on the staff report. Hearing none, he moved to the next agenda item.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

(5) ASCC Meeting of May 10, 2021

Chair Ross invited corrections to the May 10, 2021, minutes. Hearing none, Chair Ross asked if there was any update on the timing of resuming in-person meetings, given there was a technology issue related to providing video from the old schoolhouse. Planning and Building Director Russell replied that she does not have a timeline yet. They are monitoring the Governor's Executive Orders that allow meeting on Zoom instead of requiring the Commission to be present in the schoolhouse. They are watching for what the regulations may be as the state starts to open up and whether there will be specific guidelines for the state and the county. The Town is looking into the technological solution to enable hybrid meetings. Her guess was possibly in the fall.

Chair Ross invited public comments regarding the minutes of May 10, 2021. Hearing none, he entertained a motion to approve.

Vice Chair Wilson moved to approve the minutes of the May 10, 2021, ASCC meeting, as submitted; seconded by Commissioner Sill; the motion carried, 5-0.

ADJOURNMENT [6:00 p.m.]