



TOWN OF PORTOLA VALLEY

6:00 PM – Architectural Site Control Commission Meeting
Monday, March 25, 2024

SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA

HISTORIC SCHOOLHOUSE - 765 Portola Road, Portola Valley, CA 94028

Remote Public Comments: Meeting participants are encouraged to submit public comments in writing in advance of the meeting. Please send an email to asmith@portolavalley.net by 12:00 PM on the day of the meeting. All comments received by that time will be distributed to Commissioners prior to the meeting. All comments received are included in the public record.

VIRTUAL PARTICIPATION VIA ZOOM

To access the meeting by computer:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83797332927?pwd=ZZFglCHNEil35vKZjcU4B5dKYddlbw.HMpyhelKN3N-IJwU>

Or: Go to Zoom.com – Click Join a Meeting – Enter the Meeting ID

Meeting ID: 837 9733 2927 **Passcode:** 560473

To access the meeting by phone:

1.669.900.6833 or

1.888.788.0099 (toll-free)

Enter same Meeting ID and Passcode

*6 - Toggle mute/unmute.

*9 - Raise hand.

Assistance For People With Disabilities: In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Planning Department at (650) 851-1700 or planbuild@portolavalley.net. Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the Town to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting.

Public Hearings: Public Hearings provide the general public and interested parties an opportunity to provide testimony on these items. If you challenge any proposed action(s) in court, you may be limited to raising only issues you or someone else raised at the Public Hearing(s) described in this agenda, or in written correspondence delivered to the Architectural and Site Control Commission at, or prior to, the Public Hearing(s).

6:00 PM - CALL TO ORDER

Chair Goulden, Vice Chair Targ, Commissioners Breen, and Flynn

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Persons wishing to address the Architectural and Site Control Commission on any subject not on the agenda may do so now. Please note however, that the Architectural and Site Control Commission is not able to undertake extended discussion or action tonight on items not on the agenda.

NEW BUSINESS

1. A workshop to review and provide feedback to the Planning Commission on the Portola Valley Draft Zoning Code and Zoning Map Amendments required to implement the 2023-2032 Housing Element

COMMISSION, STAFF, COMMITTEE REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

2. Commission Reports
3. Staff Report

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

4. February 12, 2024

ADJOURNMENT



MEMORANDUM

TOWN OF PORTOLA VALLEY

TO: Architectural and Site Control Commission (ASCC)

FROM: Adrienne Smith, Senior Planner

DATE: March 24, 2024

RE: Workshop to Review Draft Zoning Code and Zoning Map Amendments Required to Implement the Portola Valley 2023-2031 Housing Element

BACKGROUND

At its March 20, 2024 meeting, the Planning Commission met to discuss the Draft Zoning Code and Zoning Map Amendments. View the full agenda packet, including the draft amendments and public comments [here](#). View the Planning Commission's full discussion [here](#). The amendments are the first required step to implementing the Portola Valley Housing Element and do so in two ways:

1. The amendments bring the Code into conformance with State Law and implement various programs of the newly-adopted and State-compliant Portola Valley Housing Element; and
2. The amendments rezone several parcels to new zoning classifications as identified on the Housing Element's Adequate Sites Inventory. Without a rezoning, these sites cannot be made available to be developed at the proposed densities and affordability levels as committed to in the Town's Housing Element.

Over the course of its meeting, the Planning Commission held a fulsome discussion and Commissioners made numerous suggestions to staff and consultants for corrections and clarifications. Still, the Commission determined it wanted further Town input via an expanded public review process. The Commission first agreed to continue the public meeting to a date certain – April 3, 2024. As a next step, the Commission requested that the ASCC meet at its earliest opportunity to review the draft and compile its recommendations to the Planning Commission. After the ASCC meeting, the Planning Commission and ASCC will convene for a joint meeting on April 3, 2024.

DISCUSSION

Staff recommends the ASCC engage in workshop-style session along with staff and consultants to work through its review of the draft amendments. The Planning Commission is looking for the ASCC to engage with the draft at a technical level and is

particularly seeking its guidance on the detailed objective design and development standards proposed for the new Multi-Family and Mixed-Use zoning districts. Staff also recommend the ASCC consider appointing a subcommittee of two members to compile all feedback on the draft to ensure it is precisely expressed to the Planning Commission. Staff will require submission of all feedback by March 28, 2024 to ensure its inclusion in the April 3, 2024 Planning Commission agenda packet.

NEXT STEPS

The following is a proposed (tentative) Zoning Code and Map amendments review and adoption meeting schedule:

- April 3, 2024 – Continuation of the March 20, 2024 Planning Commission meeting as a joint Planning Commission and ASCC meeting to review ASCC’s feedback on the draft amendments
- April 17, 2024 – Planning Commission meeting for the Commission to complete its review of the draft amendments and consider adopting a resolution recommending approval to Town Council of an Ordinance Amending Title 18 [Zoning] of the Portola Valley Municipal Code and Amending the Zoning Map
- May 8, 2024 (tentative) – Town Council meeting to review the Planning Commission’s recommendation on the draft amendments and consider adopting a resolution approving an Ordinance Amending Title 18 [Zoning] of the Portola Valley Municipal Code and Amending the Zoning Map (first reading)
- May 22, 2024 (tentative) – Town Council meeting for second reading of an Ordinance Amending Title 18 [Zoning] of the Portola Valley Municipal Code and Amending the Zoning Map

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ARCHITECTURAL AND SITE CONTROL COMMISSION **February 12, 2024**
Hybrid Meeting – In Person at Schoolhouse and via Zoom**CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Adrienne Smith, Senior Planner who welcomed the new and returning commissioners, and members of the public.

Present: Danna Breen, Kenny Cheung, Gina Dixon (remote), Rebecca Flynn, and Carter Warr.

Absent: None

Town Staff: Adrienne Smith, Senior Planner and John Biggs, Interim Planning & Building Director.

Ms. Smith congratulated the incoming commissioners on their appointments. Rebecca Flynn - four-year term, Carter Warr - four-year term and Gina Dixon for the rest of the year.

Ms. Smith announced that Commissioner Dixon could not attend the meeting in person but would attend via Zoom as a member of the public. Commissioner Dixon is an architect for the 80 Golden Oak project on the agenda for the meeting.

Time: 00:01:10

John Biggs introduced himself as the Interim Planning & Building Director for the Town of Portola Valley. Director Biggs stated he will be filling in until a new director is hired. He announced Senior Planner Smith as the ASCC representative, staff liaison to the Commission. He affirmed her experience and ability in working with the ASCC on a variety of projects and expressed his confidence in her ability to lead the Commission through their various projects.

Commissioner Breen commented about the Commission not meeting in quite some time and not saying goodbye and thanking the exiting Commissioners for their time. She expressed excitement for the incoming commissioners and the upcoming year and projects.

SWEARING IN OF NEW COMMISSIONERS

Time: 00:3:25

Ms. Smith led the swearing-in of Carter Warr and noted the Gina Dixon would be sworn in off-line when she returns from traveling.

ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Time: 00:4:35

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Nomination of Carter Warr for Chair by Dana Breen, seconded by Rebecca Flynn.

Nomination of Rebecca Flynn for Vice Chair by Carter Warr, seconded by Dana Breen.

Commissioner Warr and Commissioner Flynn accepted the nominations.

The motion carried unanimously.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Time: 00:8:12

Vice Chair Flynn posed questions about the process for hiring the new planning director. She believed applications for the new planning director finished last week and a number of applicants for the job had been received. She asked what the process for deciding who the new director will be, whether there will be interviews, whether the ASCC or the Planning Commission members will be involved in the process, whether ASCC will be involved in vetting some of the top candidates, or what the process is for that.

Interim Planning & Building Director Biggs responded that the process is going to rest with the Town Manager, and he is unsure if the process has been completed. It will be based upon the number of applicants received and their qualifications. He suggested they wait and see if there's any additional outreach or efforts to include various members of the community in the selection process.

Chair Warr commented based on experience and the history of hiring without ASCC and Planning Commission having any exchange with the potential candidates, that the Town Council would be remiss in not including some subcommittee of the ASCC and the Planning Commission in the interviewing process because of the close relationship that the Building and Planning Director should have with the ASCC and the Planning Commission. He asked that Director Biggs share this with Sharif and with the Town Council.

Commissioner Breen said she also wrote to Sharif and the Town Council about making sure that there were representatives from the ASCC and Planning Commission on the hiring committee. It was previously done with Tom Vlasic. Given that the Town Manager is new, it's very important to have a presence in this.

Time: 00:10:13

Vice Chair Flynn posed questions on the process as a Commission to start working with the new hire in terms of understanding what changes they may make with the process for applicants coming to the ASCC, what process they might be able to have as a group to work with, for example, to have a study session with local architects like Commissioner Breen had suggested, and recent applicants that have gone through the ASCC process in the past five years or so, so that they aren't so affected by things that happened during

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COVID. She hoped to achieve a better understanding through feedback from residents and local architects on how to improve the process for applicants coming before the ASCC. If regulation changes are needed, she wondered about the process for working out such changes.

Interim Planning & Building Director Biggs suggested agendizing the topic for a discussion at a future ASCC meeting once the new director is identified and inviting them to that meeting. The Commission needs to remember to make sure that all these discussion topics are agendized, and that the public is given an opportunity to know what is to be talked about and to participate in the process.

Time: 00:12:14

Commissioner Breen stated she was contacted by someone about an item on that night's agenda, who was not contacted. She questioned whether neighbors are being contacted about projects in the works.

Senior Planner Smith asked for Consultant Planner Jamie Bourne's input on the matter.

Consultant Planner Jamie Bourne stated the meeting is publicly noticed by the Town, at least 10 days before the meeting occurs. All the addresses are then put into the town file that are in a 300-foot radius. The process is for staff members to reach out to all that are within a 300-foot radius. She asked that the information be forwarded to her so that she could reach out to the person and to the staff for that person's information.

Commissioner Breen wanted to make sure that nothing had changed in terms of notifying. She said she also heard ADU neighbors are not being notified.

Consultant Planner Jamie Bourne confirmed that the Code does specify that neighbors are to be notified within a 300-foot radius, or a state exemption ADU, and neighbors have been notified for this meeting, even though the state exemption ADU is not under the purview under the ASCC.

Commissioner Breen stated she was not notified about any of her neighbor's ADUs. She will confirm that this week at town hall and wants to get it on the record.

Time 00:14:58

Interim Planning & Building Director Biggs reminded the Commission, a communication period for members of the public to address the commission. There is an opportunity later in the agenda under commission reports to ask clarifying questions and so forth.

Time: 00:15:32

Zoom attendee ending in #7562 thanked members of the ASCC for stepping up, especially Commissioner Breen and Commissioner Warr for stepping up and teaching

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everybody what the Code is. She communicated concerns regarding a disconnect between the processes that were previously in place and what has been seen in the last four years. Projects have been ministerially approved that do not adhere to the general plan. She felt the Town has a lot of issues and hoped they could be addressed as a community. She was concerned that programs would be going forward now that the Housing Element has been approved and asked the Commission to remember that the residents have suffered for more than five years, and their issues have not been addressed. She hoped to be able to work together collaboratively. She noted that, as a member of the Bike and Pedestrian Traffic Safety Committee, they have input regarding parking and driveways, but were never consulted before. The process in place has been neglected and she hoped they could restore it, and they will all help and support the Commission in the decision-making.

Time: 00:17:52

Zoom attendee Kristi C. stated that they are all in this together. She said she was not opposed to the project but she was 305 feet away and was not notified. She is on the corner of Golden Oak and Alpine, and this will affect her because that's where the trucks go up the road. She said she is noticing that other cities maintain 500 feet of noticing neighbors, and neighbors do better without surprises. She encouraged the Planning Commission and ASCC to notify neighbors 25 feet away. She encouraged the Commission to put it on their agenda in the future to discuss 300 feet versus 500 feet.

Time: 00:19:02

Chair Warr and Senior Planner Smith confirmed there were no additional public comments.

Chair Warr initiated moving on to the next item on the agenda the project at 80 Golden Oak, as described in the staff report. He noted that, due to a client of his next door, at 60, pursuing a project he would be recusing himself from this item. He added that since he wasn't at the last meeting he would also be abstaining from approval of minutes.

NEW BUSINESS

- (1) Architectural and Site Development Review for hardscape and landscape improvements to an existing single-family residence at 80 Golden Oak. An 800 square foot Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) is also proposed that is not under the purview of the ASCC Horvitz Residence, File #PLN_ARCH12-2022 (J. Bourne)**

Time: 00:20:30

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Jamie Bourne, Consultant Planner, presented the application for hardscape and landscape improvements at 80 Golden Oak as outlined in the staff report, sharing project details, public noticing and approval conditions for the project.

Time: 00:30:49

Vice Chair Flynn invited questions from the Commissioners.

Commissioner Cheung had a question regarding the lighting levels laid out in the Design Guidelines that were considered for this project. His understanding was the 400 lumens were over what is indicated in the Design Guidelines.

Ms. Bourne pulled up the Design Guidelines on screen and explained her understanding of them, that 1,125 lumens is the maximum allowable. She noted that if the ASCC believes by looking at the Design Guidelines and the Lighting Ordinance that lighting seems excessive, that is something that needs to be considered.

Commissioner Cheung and Ms. Bourne discussed differences between the Town Code limitations and the Design Guidelines.

Anne Hoffman joined the discussion to point out items on the chart which are existing fixtures, and which are not being proposed.

Ms. Bourne said she would need to confirm her understanding that the maximum lumens was 1,125 per fixture and follow up with the ASCC.

Commissioner Breen interjected that there are existing fixtures that are non-compliant, and there would be further comments on the topic of lighting later in the discussion.

Commissioner Flynn asked a question regarding the L3.0 fuel management plan. She asked whether it was a Portola Valley requirement or a Woodside Fire Protection District requirement.

Ms. Bourne replied that it was not a Planning requirement, but she could reach out to Woodside Fire Protection District to ask if it was their requirement.

Anne Hoffman, the architect team member, commented that Ms. Bourne had done a wonderful job presenting the project as a whole. She wanted to add that the homeowners have wanted to work with the landscape and the environment to create as much wildlife habitat as possible and to keep as many native plants as possible. She felt they had worked well together to create spaces for the homeowners to enjoy their new landscape in keeping with the guidelines of Portola Valley.

Time: 00:39:53

Vice Chair Flynn invited comments from the public.

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Kristi C reiterated her previous comment that she is not opposed to the project but since her house is 305 feet away from it, she would have appreciated receiving notice. She noted that other cities maintain 500-foot noticing to neighbors. She encouraged the Planning Commission and ASCC to notice neighbors 500 feet away, as there will be a lot of housing and building occurring in the next seven years. She asked if the stormwater capture assessment could be looked at after one year of implementation to ensure that all is working, because the proposed water crosses the street to her driveway. She asked where the staging area is for 80 Golden Oak, stating that the staging area at the top of Cervantes has been a mess. Finally, she noted that she is interested in the solar screening and hoped it would be completed sooner rather than later.

Zoom attendee ending in #7562 asked if the Commission was only looking at the water for irrigation or also the water being used for the ADU. Vice Chair Flynn responded that the ASCC is only looking at the water for landscaping.

Vice Chair Flynn invited comments from the Commissioners.

Ms. Bourne asked to provide an additional comment regarding the lighting. She pointed out that the Town has a lighting handout which she often refers to. The handout states the requirement that a light source is not to exceed 1,125 lumens. The garage door requirement is that two fixtures do not exceed 1,125 lumens. The Design Guidelines provide the guidelines for the walkways and steps and does mention some type of overhead, so she understood where there could be some confusion and will continue to work on further clarification if needed.

Ms. Bourne, Commissioner Breen and Commissioner Chueng discussed the lighting guidelines and lighting ordinance further, particularly with respect to lighting at doors.

Time: 00:46:04

Vice Chair Flynn invited discussion of the project among the Commissioners.

Commissioner Breen said she thinks this is a really good project and it makes sense. There are a lot of great things. The trellis in the back is going to provide lots of recreational space, the oaks on the property are gorgeous, and the vegetable garden is going to be a lot of fun. She said the things of concern are the lighting, because she was involved with the house when it was built, and nobody moved in to it for the longest time. She is sure that there is non-compliant lighting on site. She would like the Town to check into that. She stated that this property should be brought into compliance during this project.

Commissioner Breen recommended the path lighting to the ADU be placed on a timer or on a switch and the lights at the vegetable garden should also be on a switch. Those should not be on all the time. She thought there should be some sort of mechanism for the walkway lighting, just so neighbors aren't looking up into a semi-circle of airport lights.

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She felt that the screening of the solar panels is great, to have a little bit of screening down near the house below. She thought that the planting plan makes a lot of sense and she was totally in support of everything. She reiterated wanting to make sure that the existing lighting is compliant, and that the pathway lighting and the vegetable garden lighting are on some kind of a switch.

Commissioner Cheung questioned whether this conflict between the Town Ordinances and the Design Guidelines in terms of the lighting levels is something that has come up in the past.

Commissioner Breen remarked that the owners don't know what was approved for lighting when the house was first built, so she just wants the Town to check on it, and if there is noncompliant lighting, that should be corrected, but she liked everything else in the plan. She said she thought that the new lighting levels are a fairly new thing in the last five or so years. When she is looking at projects, she is not looking at lumens but looking at things like fixtures, whether the fixture is down lighting, whether it's covered.

Commissioner Cheung commented that what gets his attention relates to the overall functionality of the dark sky as a goal and the extent to which LEDs are making it into the system and allowing people to achieve lighting levels that would never have been possible before with the same circuits. The down lighting requirements are well-intentioned, but if there is 10 times as much light coming out of a down light, the amount that's going to reflect off of surfaces and back into the sky is going to be more than if it was an up light. Maintaining a set of lumen requirements that are well-specified will go a long way towards protecting the dark sky goal. The amount of lumens per linear foot along the walkway, and so forth, in the Design Guidelines is a more complete set of guidelines than exist in the Town Ordinance and more effective if they want the dark sky character maintained. The issue is that there is a Town Ordinance that has this 1,000-something per fixture, and it doesn't specify how many fixtures you should have, or you can't have.

Commissioner Breen commented except for the front door and the garage every door is supposed to have no more than one, though they have allowed, in some cases, two at the entry. However, the existing house has a lot of lights, although Commission Cheung's question seemed to be more about landscaping lights.

Commissioner Cheung replied that the entrance light lumens exceed the Design Guidelines for a single overhead fixture. The ones they're replacing are also over, but they're getting rid of them, which is appreciated.

Commissioner Flynn commented that legally they have to deal with the Code more than the Design Guidelines. They should be the same. She thought legally they must go by what's written in the Building Code as opposed to the Design Guidelines, which is advisory.

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Ms. Bourne responded that is correct. The lighting requirements for ASCC approval, which is listed in the Lighting Ordinance is that the following light fixtures, placements, or types are generally discouraged and require ASCC approval to be installed. And that is lighting for landscaping, trees, or structures, including entryways, features, pillars, and posts. So, then for those types of lighting, the ASCC typically would refer to the Design Guidelines for purposes of safety.

Commissioner Flynn stated that the Municipal Code says that you can have 1,100 lumens.

Ms. Bourne agreed.

Commissioner Breen commented they have always been less is more, the darker, the better. That's what the town is about, so they should try to get it as dark as possible.

Ms. Bourne agreed, that is what they are asking for the ASCC's assessment of.

Commissioner Flynn asked Commissioner Cheung, if the path lights are added up, whether they exceed the Design Guidelines. Because they're 125s, and she was unsure of the rule for the Design Guidelines.

Commissioner Cheung commented there are places where the Design Guidelines were, for stair-step lighting, 50 lumens per four-foot width of step. For low-height lighting, it was 40 lumens per linear foot of walkway, or deck patio perimeter. For overhead lighting, it was 25 lumens per linear foot of walkway.

Commissioner Flynn questioned the meaning of overhead lighting, 25 lumens per linear foot.

Commissioner Cheung responded that, along the walkway, you're allowed to have a maximum lumen output for a single fixture of 350. For multiple fixtures, it's 25 per linear foot of walkway. So, if you had a 350-lumen single fixture, you couldn't have them spaced any more tightly than [inaudible].

Commissioner Flynn questioned that 125 can then only be placed every 5 feet. This is more than 5 feet. It is 32 feet.

Commissioner Cheung stated that's fine. He thinks the only one that essentially exceeds the Design Guidelines is the one over the entry. But what he's hearing is that the Town Ordinance would supersede the Design Guidelines for an entry. This is what he is wanting to clarify, because it is something he noticed in another review that he did.

Commissioner Breen questioned the architecture team as to whether the lighting could be stepped down or reduced.

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Gina Dixon commented that the goal is to be in compliance. So, if the request is to try to get that down to 350, they can explore other options and try to pull that into conformance. She has found, for dark sky lighting, often 400 lumens are kind of a standard, but she would look into that and see if they can find something else.

Commissioner Flynn felt that Ms. Bourne should talk to the Planning Director, John, to discuss and explore the situation. If it is determined that it needs to be less than 400, then the applicant should comply with that. However, if the rule allows for more than that, because of the contradiction, they should permit it.

Commissioner Breen commented that she wanted to move the project forward that night, and she felt that the issue could be looked at after the fact.

Ms. Dixon asked if it's possible to get a standard 400-lumen fixture down to the 350 lumen lighting level, if that would be a viable option. She said sometimes they can swap out a bulb type or something like that to get the lumens down.

Commissioner Flynn commented that that was approved for the Kane House.

Commissioner Cheung thought that swapping out a bulb type would be okay. Dimming would not be okay, as far as what they were considering. If they could reach a state where it can be shown to not be selectable to be brighter it would be fine.

Commissioner Cheung stated outside of that, in general, he likes the project very much. He appreciates the sensitivity to the types of surfaces and the allowances for wildlife.

Commissioner Flynn agreed with the other two commissioners that the project is well thought out. She liked the fact that a lot of native plants have been put in place. She felt that the lighting is minimal and for safety. She appreciated the safeguarding of the beautiful oak trees. She recommended the three pride of Madeira plants be removed, as this was part of the Conservation Committee's concerns.

Another of Commissioner Flynn's concerns related to a reduction in the driveway turnout space. With the steepness of the driveway, it would be important to be able to back out of the garage and turn around to go down the driveway frontwards. There are also two extra parking spaces required for the house and ADU, and she recommended thinking through the placement carefully to make sure it would be possible to back out of the garage and turn around, including a scenario where there were one or two cars parked in the extra spaces. She added that she didn't think there was an issue with impermeable surface area, and she questioned including square footage for the driveway that is not actually on the property in those calculations.

Commissioner Flynn made the observation that the 21 trees that are planned to be in 36-inch or 48-inch box are enormous trees that will require monstrous holes to be dug and cranes and forklifts to install. It may be challenging to get the heavy equipment that will

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be required up to the site. She remarked that the applicant might want think through the committed involved. She said that instant landscaping is fine, but she has found personally, with dealing with Portola Valley soil, it tends to be rather unpredictable and difficult. She has found that the bigger the tree is, the greater the chance that it might actually not make it. She noted that this does not affect the ASCC review, but is simply a consideration for the applicant to think about.

Commissioner Breen commented that oftentimes smaller trees grow faster. A 24 is fairly easy to plant, but a 36 gets into needing help moving it around the property. The less you have to drive around this property the better, because every time you disturb the soil, you invite invasives in, and the least amount of disruption to the land itself would be best. She recommended looking at 15 gallons. Her thought about the parking space and impervious surface was that maybe they could do a parkable meadow there, on plastic cones, that wouldn't affect the impervious surface.

Commissioner Breen also mentioned construction staging which will be important because they cannot park on the street, so she questioned where the workers will be and how that would be managed. She acknowledged that it will go to the Planning Department.

Commissioner Flynn responded they've included a page about that. Although not related to the ASCC's decision, the construction staging does involve taking up pretty much the driveway and the garage. So, it just will be important for the applicant to understand where they personally will be parking, where their workers will be parking to minimize disruption to the neighborhood, because there's no way to park on Golden Oak.

Commissioner Breen added trucks backing down the driveway, like a previous project on Westridge, was very difficult.

Commissioner Flynn concluded her comments, stating that, otherwise, she feels that the plan is really nice and she thought they could probably move the project forward.

Commissioner Breen agreed.

Commissioner Flynn wanted to approve the project with some conditions, stating that she is actually fine with the lighting as is.

Time: 01:07:18

Commissioner Cheung felt the project was close enough to approve as is, despite the differences between the Ordinance and the Design Guidelines. He did want to point out and publicly make a request of the Planning Department that, going forward, applicants will be asked to conform to the Design Guidelines on the lighting. He said it should make things easier. There have been many discussions in the past few years in which it was

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forgotten how clear the Design Guidelines are on how many lumens and how often, and he reiterated that they are quite clear for outdoor lighting.

Time: 01:08:7

Commissioner Breen commented she'd love to put it on the agenda where someone from the Planning Department comes and talks to them about it and informs them so that they know what they're talking about and can make better decisions around lighting. She advocated for an educational session with the ASCC soon.

Commissioner Breen proposed that they move the project forward and asked if the other Commissioners wanted to see the lighting proposal come back for review.

Commissioners Cheung and Flynn were fine with this.

Time 01:08:57

Motion made by Commissioner Breen to approve the project with the condition that the lighting at the vegetable garden and the stairs be addressed at the Planning Department level without ASCC involvement, and with the condition that the three pride of Maderias be removed.

Commissioner Flynn wanted to know if they should address the parking issue, and the question of it possibly being inadequate.

Commissioner Breen asked Ms. Dixon if she felt additional parking was needed, given the ADU.

Ms. Dixon thought they could look at it, but they would defer to the ASCC. The landscape team had studied it.

Ms. Hoffman agreed that they could take a look at it. She felt that If they did add anything, such as the meadow idea, it would count to about 50 percent for impervious surface, so they would need to balance their impervious surfaces to some extent. They will talk to the client and make sure that they are aware of the concerns, which she felt were very valid points.

Ms. Bourne interjected that the Code does require the two 9x18 guest parking spaces. She acknowledged that, in looking at it in more detail, reducing the driveway turnout space would make it very difficult to back out of the garage if there are cars parked there. There may need to be an additional area to accommodate two 9x18 uncovered spaces.

Commissioner Flynn asked if the spaces could be placed further down the driveway.

Ms. Hoffman said they would take a look at it. There are issues with the slope and existing trees, and the area is quite small. They were trying to create a softer entrance to the front door, but they will see if there is a way to fit another parking spot in that area, although it

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is a very challenging space. She said the clients were okay with the backing out, but they will revisit that issue with them as well.

Commissioner Flynn said the issue is with backing out when there are two cars sitting there. It is something to look at carefully.

Commissioner Breen thought the driveway issue should possibly come back to one of the Commissioners.

Commissioner Cheung felt the question was whether the situation created some sort of hazard or concern at the street.

Commissioner Flynn felt that if they had to back out the driveway, it would be a hazard at the street.

Ms. Hoffman said if the clients were able to turn their car around to their satisfaction and come down the driveway face forward, there would not be a safety issue.

Commissioner Flynn reiterated that they would need to be able to turn their car around with two cars parked in the extra spaces.

Commissioner Cheung thought it would be sufficient to include a recommendation that the client must understand the concerns that are being raised with regard to this issue.

Commissioner Breen asked if they wanted a condition that there be two new places to park.

Commissioner Cheung did not feel that was necessary. He agreed with the condition to remove the pride of Madeira and a condition that the applicant have full understanding of the situation with the driveway.

Commissioner Breen asked if it should be handled at the Planning level or if an ASCC member should be involved.

Commissioner Flynn said it comes down if they do require the extra space and a change to the landscape plans, then an ASCC member should review it again.

Commissioner Breen agreed and thought Commissioner Flynn should review it, because she was interested in the driveway and parking situation.

Ms. Hoffman asked, if the clients were comfortable with being able to get in and out of the driveway with two cars parked in it, if they would still need to come back to the ASCC.

Commissioner Breen said they would not be coming back to the ASCC, but would be talking to the Planning Department with any different ideas, and then Commissioner Flynn would take a look at it. She said they are trying to get the applicants moving along.

Ms. Hoffman responded that they appreciate that.

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Amended motion made by Commissioner Breen to approve the project as submitted, with the condition of removing the pride of Madeira, adding the managed lighting and possibly looking at the parking situation, with any changes approved by Commissioner Flynn and the Planning Department. Seconded by Commissioner Cheung.

Ms. Bourne had a question regarding the public input about the stormwater implementation the year after the final building permit approval, whether that needed to be included in the conditions of approval, or if it will be considered.

Commissioner Flynn felt it was already a condition of the Public Works Department. She thought with the submission for the building permit they would have to provide evidence of how the water would drain and be kept on the site.

Commissioner Breen said they had talked about this at the site meeting, after noticing that water had gone through the area of the solar panels. They had noted that it was probably related to the construction around the solar panels. She agreed that Public Works would be looking at this.

Commissioner Cheung thought it had been considered in the civil engineering design work, everything together including the exemption ADU.

Ms. Bourne added that Engineering and Geology do look at the proposal again at the time of building permit submittal, which can be submitted 15 days after the appeal period has expired.

The vote was taken. The motion passed by voice vote.

Commissioner Flynn said she had forgotten to mention that they should probably start the planting around the solar panels now.

Commissioner Breen said they had talked about that in other areas of the project as well, that whatever planting they can do early is good.

Commissioner Flynn noted that it would not be affected by the construction but that it would definitely help the neighborhood.

[Chairman Warr returned to the meeting]

COMMISSION, STAFF, COMMITTEE REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Time 01:19:59

2. Commission Reports

Commissioner Breen reported she has been working on the long driveway on Pinion, which is a very large property. Trail work had been done on the property, and they had been required to remove the furniture up at the top. Nona, on the Conservation

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Committee has been very active. They had a meeting there a week ago, and they are getting ready. Planting will be starting, and they approved them moving forward. The project is complicated mostly due to invasives management. She said the team knows what they're doing, and that they would probably learn a lot from them.

Commissioner Flynn wondered if they still had to officially come before the ASCC.

Commissioner Breen thought that they were an ad hoc, and that they approved them, so she did not think they were coming back to the ASCC.

Commissioner Flynn didn't think they ever came before the Commission formally, but just had an advisory meeting. They wanted to get pre-approval for their pool, et cetera. If they were planning to do major changes they would need to come officially to the Commission.

Commissioner Breen said they need to get started with the planting, or they won't start this year.

Chair Warr commented about the invasives management [inaudible] unless they exceed 100 yards of earth movement and 5,000 square feet of changes.

Commissioner Breen thought it had been in motion before she joined the Commission, so had assumed that they had been there.

Ms. Smith said she recognized the project. Jake Garcia was the planner. She would follow up with him on the status.

Commissioner Flynn reported that she had reviewed the Kane project on Hillbrook. She approved the fencing but had an issue with some of the plants along Alpine Road. Commissioner Breen then took it over.

Commissioner Breen reported that they had been working with the Planning Department, and she thought they were done. She then got involved with the one across the street, with their fencing, on the corner of Hillbrook and Alpine. She thought that this project was in motion as well.

Chair Warr asked a question about the property [inaudible].

Commissioner Breen replied that they had put the fencing in without coming to the Town.

Commissioner Cheung reported that he had done a building permit review at 350 Grove. It was a property that had a lot of feature lighting, including lighting at a gate. They applicant did everything that was asked for, but this is what prompted him to look into the issue of how precisely described the lighting Design Guidelines are. With appreciation for their effort to be responsive to what they had asked for, although they weren't as precise as they could have been, he thought he okayed it, although there is still a possibility of

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some open discussion about that, as to whether or not he has officially okayed it. He said the applicants were responsive to the letter to what they had asked for, but there was still some ambiguity.

Commissioner Breen noted the amount of discussion they had had around lighting per the Code and lighting per the Design Guidelines and what the difference is.

Commissioner Flynn agreed, there is a contradiction between the two.

Chair Warr noted that the Building Code requires some more lighting, and then there are strategies around how to deal with lighting beyond the building, which really is beyond the Building Code. For example, how to deal with stairs on an open hill. This would have been some of his concern on the long path to the ADU. He said he hoped that, with Ms. Smith's help, they could actually see projects before they're fully baked, in order to help, particularly with the location of ADU's. The path on the previous project would be one of the things he would be most concerned about. It precipitates a path that can end up looking like a long set of lights that is far beyond where the path of travel might be.

Chair Warr went on to explain that if the ADU could have been located differently it might obviate the need for the long path lights. It presents a problem from a design standpoint and from a review standpoint. ADUs are exempt, but is the siting of them exempt? Because what that project was reviewing was siting and the precipitation of grading associated with some of it. If the grading, the patio and terrace work had been split behind that, from the vegetable garden, which is a lot of structure for the vegetable garden, how that cascaded down the hill to the ADU, if they had had the ability to opine about the siting when it was still in sketches, they could have potentially moved the ADU around eliminating a lot of the concerns.

Commissioner Breen hoped that they had made progress on that this year, with Council and the Town Manager, in seeing projects early.

Chair Warr hoped to put on a future ASCC for review a potential ordinance change clarifying how and when the ASCC sees things. The ASCC could have input at the conceptual design stage, before re-establishing a completeness list for application that doesn't include hundreds of thousands of dollars in consultant fees, but is about moving things around, so that the ASCC could participate in whether a project makes sense or not. The Commission could be utilized as a Town resource to help people reduce the impacts of projects. Some of the ADU projects he has seen that are potentially quite impactful that are moving under the radar with things like lighting and landscaping, paths and how they are utilized, are things that he hoped that as a Town they could get involved in to help people make their decisions.

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Commissioner Cheung said he is sensitive to the fact that adding a cycle with the ASCC is adding to the Planning Department's responsibility and adds costs for the applicant as well.

Chair Warr responded that what he is suggesting is that there is very little staff involvement at the conceptual design level.

Commissioner Cheung said what he was thinking was that there might be a way for applicants to come directly to them for that sort of thing, where they would make themselves available for that.

Chair Warr thought this was part of what needed to be agendized, noting that they were not really allowed to have discussion about this without it being on an agenda. He suggested that he, as Chair, write an outline of what he was thinking and put it on an agenda. The last thing he wanted to do was make Planning's job harder. He hoped to make Planning's job easier, but give the ASCC an opportunity for more input. Some of it reverted back to his experience during the 90's when there was very little concern about the number of times the ASCC met, the number of reviews, and the application requirements were considerably less. A lot of single family residential projects could be pursued without the need or requirement for formal civil engineering and other things that have crept in, such as water management, green building checklists, et cetera. Many of those good ideas have actually taken away the ASCC's ability to have an influence. In the 90's they could say, "Why don't you think about moving the building?" where it could have an incredibly improved effect on the environment, the relationship between neighbors and the onsite impacts. He felt that this was where the ASCC's role was originally intended, under the inclusion of architectural and site control. It was not about enforcing the rules. It was about encouraging good decision-making around the scope of project that the applicant is looking at so that instead of picking an easy route, there might be a harder route that does a better job. He said the path across the bottom of that property is kind of weird. He would like to ask the question about how the solar panels ever got approved as well.

Commissioner Breen said they don't have a say. It was out of their hands.

Chair Warr asked if there was a building permit approved for it.

Commissioner Breen thought so.

Commissioner Flynn thought there must have been because it involved electrical.

Commissioner Breen wondered if there was a Council Liaison or Planning Commission Liaison in the meeting.

Ms. Smith responded that they did not reappoint liaisons this year.

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Commissioner Breen said she is looking forward to Chair Warr's suggestion.

Chair Warr said it is what he is recommending as a process.

Commissioner Flynn wondered if he anticipated the whole Commission meeting early on to brainstorm with the clients.

Chair Warr replied not so much brainstorming, but having a reaction and then having site meetings to review things. He said in the 90's and 2000's, they did a lot of this, and they were very effective at reducing the amount of hyperbole between neighbors. It helped ASCC members through an agendaized onsite meeting actually get to a lot of the really important stuff. If all they were dealing with was the number of light fixtures and the plant species, he didn't feel that was accomplishing what the ASCC role was intended to be. He felt it was more about making good decisions about sites and having positive influence.

Commissioner Breen recalled that applicant and residents were happy. They would thank the Commission at the end. It was hard work, but they had better projects.

Chair Warr added that they didn't have to go through months and months of filling out forms, getting engineers to respond, dotting I's and crossing T's. It was more about the content. It embodied fewer engineers.

Commissioner Breen hoped they could get back to that.

Commissioner Flynn said she also looked forward to seeing the proposal.

Chair Warr reiterated that he hoped to put it up on an early agenda this year, because it would make the relationship between applicants and the ASCC much less fearful and much more positive.

Commissioner Breen commented that she had earlier asked for an educational consult about lighting, the difference between the Design Guidelines and the Code, so that they understand.

Commissioner Flynn felt that they also needed one also regarding fire defensible space, because the regulations seem to be changing on a daily basis. They conflict. She said she read the one they are considering this month.

Chair Warr said there are some changes they've made that materially make large parts of the town unprotected from fire, because they increased the required flow of hydrants without consulting the water provider about the flow that they can produce.

Commissioner Flynn wondered, regarding the memo, if Chair Warr anticipated also in having a meeting about it, inviting other local architects who have had projects, to get their feedback on what would make the most sense, and other applicants.

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Chair Warr responded that the point of view he is hoping to bring is more reverting to a kinder, friendlier, but more productive early interaction. He thought having other architects and design professionals, the Town Attorney, would also need to have a level of concentration on this as well, because there has been a lot of legislation over the past six to ten years that has obviated the ability to have subjective review.

Commissioner Breen said it might also be great to have the former planner, Tom, come and talk about how effective it was.

Chair Warr reiterated that this is what he is hoping for early this spring, and he would love to get the Commissioners' thoughts about it. His intention to have it agendaized for a few meetings going forward – suggested processes to make the ASCC more efficient and effective, particularly if there are agendas with no project ideas to be discussed, they would use that time. They would benefit from it, and can do it without increasing the load on Planning staff.

Commissioner Cheung mentioned the safety issue with the water and said he felt they have the responsibility to raise that up, as it sounds like a serious issue.

Chair Warr said he raised the issue with the Fire Marshal and with some of the Planning staff. He raised it with Cal Water, and they responded, "If you want it, you get to pay for it," meaning the applicant, or whoever needs the water.

Commissioner Flynn asked if an applicant would be required to put a new fire hydrant outside their home or something.

Chair Warr said this would be what the workaround is, but in order to do that, they could not use Cal Water's water to feed the hydrant. They would have to use water that has already been distributed to the property and is stored on the property. This was another discussion for another day, but the creeping rules coming down mostly from the State are very problematic for the Commission, for the Planning staff and for applicants. It increases the cost of housing while they try to do affordable housing.

Commissioner Flynn noted it costs \$50,000 just for permits to build a new house in Portola Valley. You can't find an affordable home that starts with \$50,000 before even hiring an architect or hit a nail.

Commissioner Cheung added that that is just the permitting fees and doesn't include professional services fees.

3. Staff Report

There was no staff report.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

4. November 13, 2024

Chair Warr invited public comments regarding the minutes.

Rita commented that it is exciting to hear different things that the Commission has been doing lately. She said it was probably less than two years ago that Laura Russell was saying that this group was done and was not going to have many meetings in the future, and was kind of redundant. She said the town needs this group and needs it to be lively and active, not just cancelling nonstop meetings when they see all of this construction that is happening in town. They can't even start discussion about what is in the General Plan when everything is being changed on the fly. She was happy to hear the discussion, and she hoped the momentum does not end with the discussion that night, but actually puts together a plan to move forward. She said, with all of the new housing, no matter if someone says it doesn't matter what anyone puts up, if there's a McDonald's at the end of the street, it will be really bad for the town, and shame on all of them. She asked that they not give up on the town and their General Plan. She asked that they read the General Plan if they haven't before and get some things going in the town. She thanked the Commission for all the are doing.

Kristi C. wanted to comment on the previous item. She shared regarding a water hydrant. When she went to knock on the door, since she was not involved with the noticing, she noticed that the fire hydrant in front of the house was leaking, so she reported that. It looked like a backhoe was right next to it, so there's something going on with water and fire hydrants. She said she would appreciate if they could understand what Chair Warr meant by increasing the flow of the hydrants. It is the hydrant closest to their house, and she is concerned with that flow. She called around regarding 300 feet and 500 feet. Woodside is 300 feet, but they have 500 feet for the WCF wireless communication facility. Los Altos Hills has 500 feet, and it has been that way for 25 years. Los Altos is 300 feet; Hillsborough is 500 feet, so it is all over the board, and if it includes more people to be notified and involved, and if the Commission was going to walk sites, she could have been there making her comments not at this meeting but at the site meeting, and then she would be done. She asked that the public be invited to the walk-throughs when they can.

Caroline agreed with what Rita and Kristi said. They want to be involved, because they have experience, having been there for a long time. She had a question about the Municipal Code as a member of BPTS. She said before Laura left she invited the BPTS to have an input on driveways. She wondered if the current project subjected them to Municipal Code 1720, which should be another conditional input before approving this project. As Chair Warr said, there are so many other issues because all of the affordable housing is alongside their scenic corridors, Alpine and Portola Road, at the ground level, so they will not have any issues with water pressure or with any communications. But all

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of the people above it have been suffering for many years. She said she could give a great example – Palmer Lane. All of the utilities are underground, and they suffer a lot. She has a formal complaint with the water company because the Town did not want to help them. There are several issues. There was an earthquake fault by the lower fire hydrant and they have been told by the Fire Department several years ago, they will not go up to the second one.

Chair Warr interjected that this is not the night's subject and they needed to finish.

Caroline asserted that these are issues they have presented to the previous Town Council and they have been ignored.

Chair Warr reminded her that they are not the Council.

Caroline argued that there are several people who have been limited in their projects and who are still waiting to be approved by the Town Council or the Planning Department. She will relay to them what happened that day because it is refreshing, but it is unfair that people are put on hold for no reason.

Chair Warr said they appreciated her comments, but needed to keep moving.

Time 01:50:23

Motion to approved the minutes by Commissioner Breen. Seconded by Commissioner Flynn, the motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT [7:50 p.m.]