

(8) Checklist for Sustainable Buildings

Ms. Lambert reviewed her memo on the: 1) San Mateo Countywide Sustainable Buildings Checklist; 2) next steps of the Countywide Green Building Committee; and 3) incentives/green building programs in other jurisdictions. She added that Jill Boone from Recycleworks was developing a workshop to be held September 10 at Hidden Villa that would focus on the ten top things that could be done to "green a house" in jurisdictions like the Town; councils and commissions from the jurisdictions were invited. Incentives and policies would also be discussed at that meeting. Additionally, she recommended sending out the Countywide Sustainable Building Guidelines to all of the architects that worked regularly in Town to let them know that this was encouraged.

Councilmember Merk said he supported the program and what the staff was doing. Responding to Councilmember Merk, Ms. Lambert confirmed that the benefits--such as expedited plan check and/or reduced processing fees--were being offered to individuals. Councilmember Merk said he liked the Santa Barbara County incentive program and thought the ASCC might be able to help out with something similar. Ms. Lambert noted that many of the jurisdictions she contacted were just getting started on their programs; things would develop as communities/areas started working on their programs.

Mr. Lane said there was a fantastic open space preserve on the eastern border and a green building that had won a number of awards. He thought a workshop might be held at Jasper Ridge. It would also help to build a connection between Stanford and the Town; right now, the Wedge was being re-appraised for a new lease, and trails were also involved.

Responding to Mayor Comstock, Ms. Lambert said the ASCC asked applicants what green programs they were incorporating. Often, the Town received a list from the architect that indicated what items would be looked into.

After discussion, Councilmember Davis suggested that the liaisons to the ASCC and Planning Commission reaffirm and encourage them to focus on sustainable building concepts. Town Planner Mader suggested a field trip to Jasper Ridge by the ASCC, Planning Commission and Councilmembers be held. It might also provide some ideas for the Town Center. Ms. Lambert said she would coordinate. Councilmember Merk said he was also interested in the Hidden Villa workshop.

Responding to Councilmember Toben, Ms. Lambert said the intent was that all applicants going through architectural review would be required to complete the checklist; staff would try to get as many people to do so as possible. She confirmed that if an applicant checked an item, they did not necessarily have to do it. Councilmember Toben said he did not feel the documents said enough about the cost savings/financial benefit of doing some of these things. While many homeowners might not have financial savings of 2-5% foremost in their minds, some would. Many people complained in Town about the high cost of permits. If there was some way to look at meaningful relief without devastating fiscal impacts, he would be open to that. He noted that the other communities listed in the memo might not have the same demographics, etc., that the Town had. Additionally, he felt a six-month versus one-year trial basis might be preferable, or at least have an interim report in 6 months to allow some adjustments. Mayor Comstock agreed.

Councilmember Merk agreed it would be more appropriate for people to check those things that they actually wanted to do. Ms. Lambert noted that there would be another meeting next week to talk about how to get the information out. She hoped to get people involved before they started their design program. She agreed with a 6-month trial period.